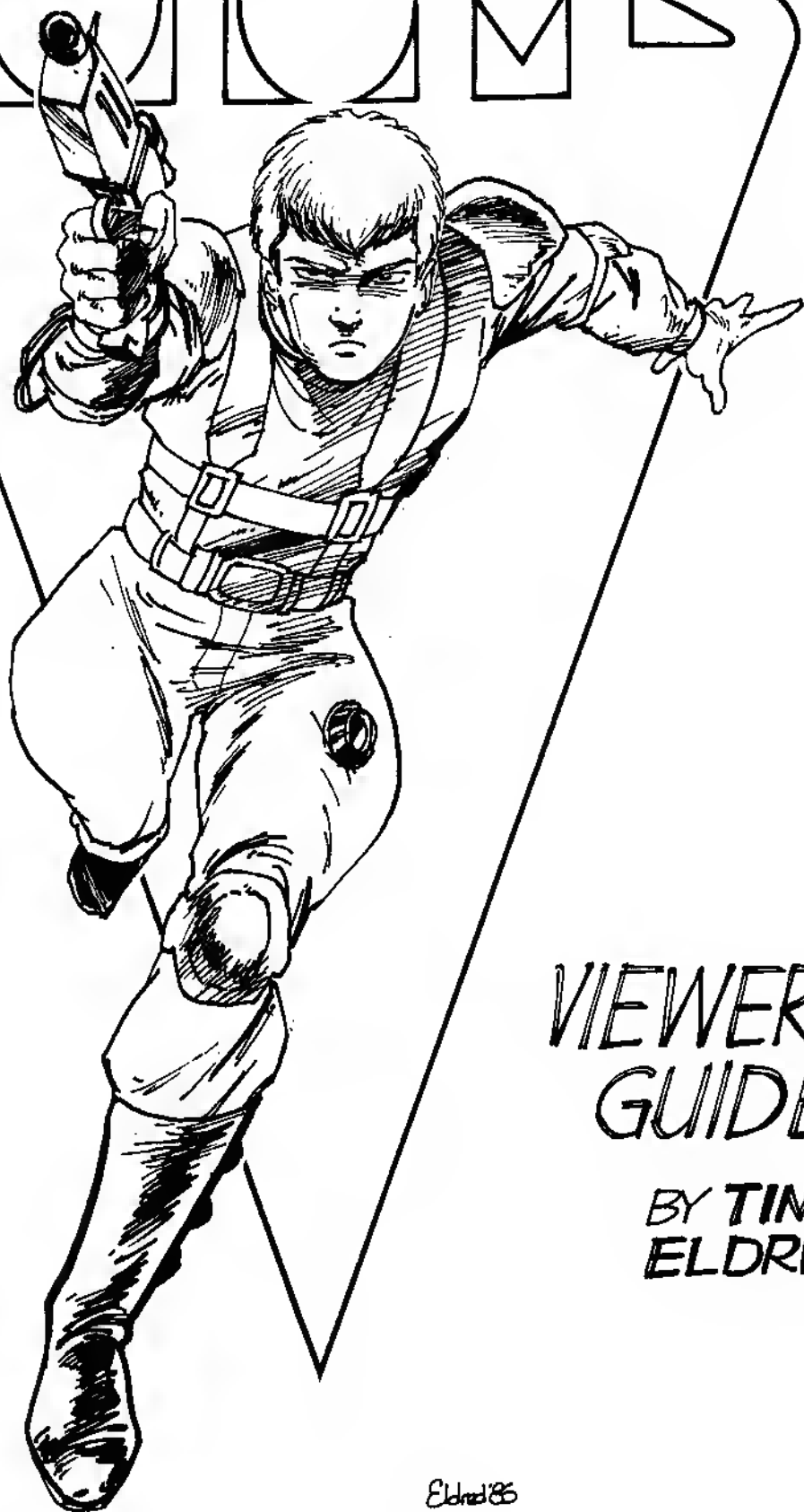


A R M O R E D • T R O O P E R

VTOMS



VIEWER'S GUIDE

BY TIM
ELDRED

ATTENTION
ALL ANIME FANS!



LOOK WHO'S SMILING NOW!

HIS NAME IS CHIRICO CUVIE. AND
HE'S HAD A ROUGH LIFE AS ANY
VIEWER OF

ARMORED TROOPER VOTOMS

CAN TELL YOU.

WHY IS CHIRICO SMILING? SIMPLE!
BECAUSE NOW HIS STORY IS
AVAILABLE IN **ENGLISH!**

THAT'S RIGHT, THE
**VOTOMS VIEWER'S
GUIDE** IS NOW READY!

TWO YEARS OF EXHAUSTIVE
RESEARCH AND THREE
BURNED-OUT TRANSLATORS
HAVE GONE INTO THIS
PROJECT, AND YOU GET TO
FEAST ON THE RESULTS,
YOU LUCKY PERSON!

Like the VOTOMS series itself, the GUIDE is divided into story segments as follows:

INTRODUCTION • (16 Pages)

ROOTS OF TREACHERY (OAV) • (9 Pages)

UODOO (TV episodes 1-13) • (19 Pages)

KUMMEN (TV episodes 14-28) • (30 Pages)

LAST RED SHOULDER (OAV) • (9 Pages)

SUNSA (TV episodes 29-39) • (24 Pages)

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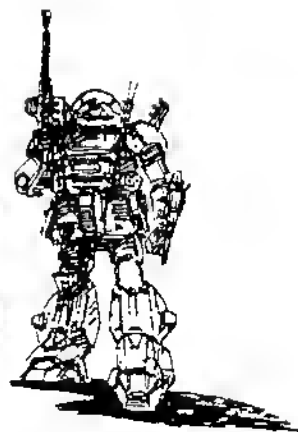
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装甲騎兵

ボトムズ

ARMORED TROOPER
VOTOMS
VIEWER'S GUIDE



ORIGINAL STORY BY
RYOSUKE TAKAHASHI

CHARACTER DESIGN
NORIO SHIOYAMA

MECHA DESIGN
KUNIO OKAWARA

MANGA ART
MINORU NONAKA

ENGLISH TEXT AND PRESENTATION BY
TIM ELDRED

TRANSLATION BY
HITOSHIRO AKEHI • EARNEST MIGAKI • KATSU SUZUKI

Having purchased this book, I can assume you are already familiar with the unique medium of Japanese Animation, so I'll get right to the good stuff. What you may guess is that VOTOMS, out of the many anime series to come from Japan, is individually deserving of the devotion it took to produce a volume this size over all the inherent obstacles.

I think so.

My first hint of VOTOMS' existence came in 1984 while scanning the racks of a Michigan hobby shop. There, among the new, flamboyant MACROSS models, was a nonchalant Scopedog. Now, I won't get all nebulous about it, but something clicked in my mind when I saw it. Its design and the program it must have originated from seemed so...right that I couldn't resist the purchase, though convinced I would never quite learn why.

Then a friend, Steve Harrison, mentioned he had the first five TV episodes. Here, after YAMATO, which I believed was the greatest anime of all, was a series that embodied everything I liked about science-fiction: a tough, gritty atmosphere, colorful characters, driving music, and layer upon layer of logistic detail. Of course, the language barrier rendered much of the story inaccessible, but in the face of all else, this mattered little.

It was early 1983, the boom year of post-GUNDAM Japanese Robot Animation. Writer/Director Ryosuke Takahashi had introduced DOUGRAM to audiences eager for more of the exciting new potentials GUNDAM had inspired by shifting perspective away from the robot superteam shows of the Seventies. Now, quite properly, the anime robot was shown to work best as a tool to further human goals.

DOUGRAM was Takahashi's first step into this philosophical territory, and he was about to take a bigger one.

"After DOUGRAM, I wanted to write a fantasy," Takahashi said of that time, "and I wanted a world in which robots were not unnatural, but that was difficult to combine with a fantasy story and I didn't want to copy DUNBINE...so I changed my plans and created VOTOMS."

This new series, released by Nippon Sunrise, broadcast from April 1983 to April 1984. Its ratings were not phenomenal at the time, but VOTOMS' popularity virtually exploded over the following years as spinoffs emerged, both on video and in print. Today, VOTOMS rivals GUNDAM in its scope and complexity, giving rise to the suspicion that it was a series ahead of its time.

Part of the reason for its latent success was the meticulous planning that went into the program from the beginning, especially when the limitations of the television medium were confronted.

"In TV there is always the possibility of cancellation," Takahashi observes, "so we divided the story into several parts (to present variety) and left gaps that gave us the opportunity for future stories."

He started with an intriguing premise: if a soldier knows nothing but war all his life, what happens to him when the war ends and he must rejoin society? At first, Takahashi reasoned, some would find simulation of war in a battle ring, like a wrestling match, and over time and after seeing many people and places, the soldier would become rehabilitated.

I took the initiative to track down the source of these episodes, a man named David Ledermann, and was dumbfounded when he claimed not to care for them and quite simply gave me his entire set of the first thirteen!

Thus was the die cast. Over the next few years I assembled a complete collection, bought books and videos, and basically enjoyed an extended VOTOMS orgy. But what next?

In 1986 I learned of the Cartoon/Fantasy Organization and that its Chairman, Randall Stucky, wanted to start an anime APA. I joined, raved up and down in its pages about how great VOTOMS was, and finally wrote a character guide to prove it. I now had the impetus to produce an episode guide as well.

Three years and three translators later, the VIEWER'S GUIDE is finished. I've found that seldom does an anime program equal what you interpret it to be, but as VOTOMS unfolded before me, my imagination was surpassed.

Hopefully, this book will grant you the same pleasure. It is dedicated to Steve, Dave, Randall, and everyone else who played a part in its genesis.

TIM ELDRED, 1989

The soldier Takahashi had in mind would become Chirico Cuvie, but many other elements would be developed before his saga could be fully realized.

Takahashi was envisioning the setting for his story and was strongly influenced by the 1982 film BLADE RUNNER. Co-writer Soji Yoshikawa remembers him considering the inclusion of a replicant-like being, and things began to fall into place.

"There were discussions at NIPPON SUNRISE at that time about different ways to operate a robot and whether it was enough to have ordinary human ability. Our Perfect Soldier concept arose from that."

With this as a catalyst, Takahashi was given to build Chirico's character from deeper observations of war in general.

"There will be war," Takahashi says, "as long as there is a tendency in people to either dominate, or want to be dominated."

He explored this peripherally in DOUGRAM but, as he admits, the viewpoint was too broad and the characters not strong enough.

"In VOTOMS, the camera is more intimate and concentrated on the hero. I wanted him to have a strong personality, but refuse to dominate or be dominated."

Together, Takahashi and Yoshikawa forged ahead with the first part of the story. As they progressed, they found Chirico's character too strong to remain bound to one place, so as locales changed, the focus of the story drew tighter as well. But, incredibly, they still had not thought of an ending.

Story writer Toji Gomu recalls how this problem was dealt with:

"Generally, this type of robot anime has an ending figured when we start. But when Chirico's battles were over, how would he fill the void in his heart, or would he have to live on without hope? To answer these questions, I think Director Takahashi prepared the God-story to help Chirico along."

The "God-story" is said to have been inspired by Takahashi's reading of 'The Nine Billion Names of God' by Arthur C. Clarke, which involved a gigantic computer of divine proportions. Around this basic premise, Takahashi built the image of the planet Quent, to which Chirico travels in the final segment of the series. Soji Yoshikawa recalls the extensive logic that had to be worked out to maintain the integrity of the story.

"We had to write the history of everything. It was difficult, but if we can make this kind of story, we could even explore the occult, though that would be impossible for TV."

Consequently, they decided not to overemphasize either this or the 'mere human ability' aspect, so as not to drift too far into melodrama. But what they did create inspired so much intrigue that the follow-ups have been non-stop since 1984.

No less than nine video releases (including three

originals), a series of sidestory novels called BLUE KNIGHT BERSERGA, an OAV 'sequel' series, ARMORED HUNTER MELLORINK, and numerous books have carried the world of VOTOMS far beyond its original premise.

Takahashi went on to create many other successful anime series including VIFAM, GALIENT, and SPT LAYZNER, but many still consider VOTOMS his masterwork and although it seems easy to categorize as 'serious robot anime,' Takahashi reminds us of its sentimental ending.

"A happy ending is not a probable one in a series like this--after all, we wouldn't want to see someone like Chirico raising a family." Conversely, it wouldn't necessarily be a good thing, for example, if the heroine were to meet a tragic end, so the story ends as it does.

Perhaps Ryosuke Takahashi got to write his fantasy after all.

MECHANICAL DESIGN KUNIO OKAWARA

Kunio Okawara has become one of the most respected and imitated mecha designers in anime, having worked on virtually every major program from GUNDAM to DRAGONAR. But to this day, VOTOMS remains his favorite.

Part of the reason was the time frame. Fresh from GUNDAM and DOUGRAM, he had established three basic criteria his next set of designs would follow.

"First," he explains, "when we would eventually produce the products (models, toys, etc. derived from the series) they had to pose exactly as designed without modification.

"Second, we wanted something smaller in scale than the DOUGRAM robots, which were too big.

"Third, it had to look as if it were made in a factory of today."

Once established, these three ideas resulted in some of the most appealing, certainly the most realistic, robot designs from that era of anime. Designing them in terms of products in advance of the series was a new approach at that time, and added an incredible degree of logic.

Later, however, when it came time to design new robots for the videos, some of the concepts were set aside in favor of 'characteriz-

ing' the newer mecha for the sake of the story. But Okawara justly takes pride in the quality of his original designs that rise a cut above even the standards of six years later.



CHARACTER DESIGN NORIO SHIOYAMA

Having worked under veteran character designer Soji Yoshikawa on DOUGRAM, Norio Shiyama was given the task of designing the VOTOMS characters on his own. From the beginning, Shioyama wanted to design Chirico Cuvie on the basis of his disposition.

"I first imagined Chirico as a boy whose mind was damaged by the war. As he met many people and experienced many things, the would heals."

And, conceptually, the look of the character would soften to reflect this as the story progressed. As the project evolved, however, the character became slightly less severe and more mature-looking, also allowing a greater range of expression.

This differentiated Chirico from, for example, a supporting character like Vanilla, who does not require an extensive facial vocabulary and thus can look severe in any instance.

Fyana, on the other hand, required a different design approach. Shioyama wanted her P.S. nature to set her above ordinary humans, so he originally wanted her to possess a regality or divinity.

As the character was written into more and more action scenes, it became necessary to toughen her up for practical reasons, but the original impetus is still apparent, especially in her depiction in THE LAST RED SHOULDER.

Shioyama shared key animation duties on VOTOMS with Moriyasu Tanikuchi, who would later design characters for SPT LAYZNER, but the videos released since the series ended have been all Shioyama, epitomizing the characters' appearances at their best.

Shiyama has since gone on to design characters for GALIENT and SAMURAI TROOPERS as well as illustrations for various VOTOMS books and posters.

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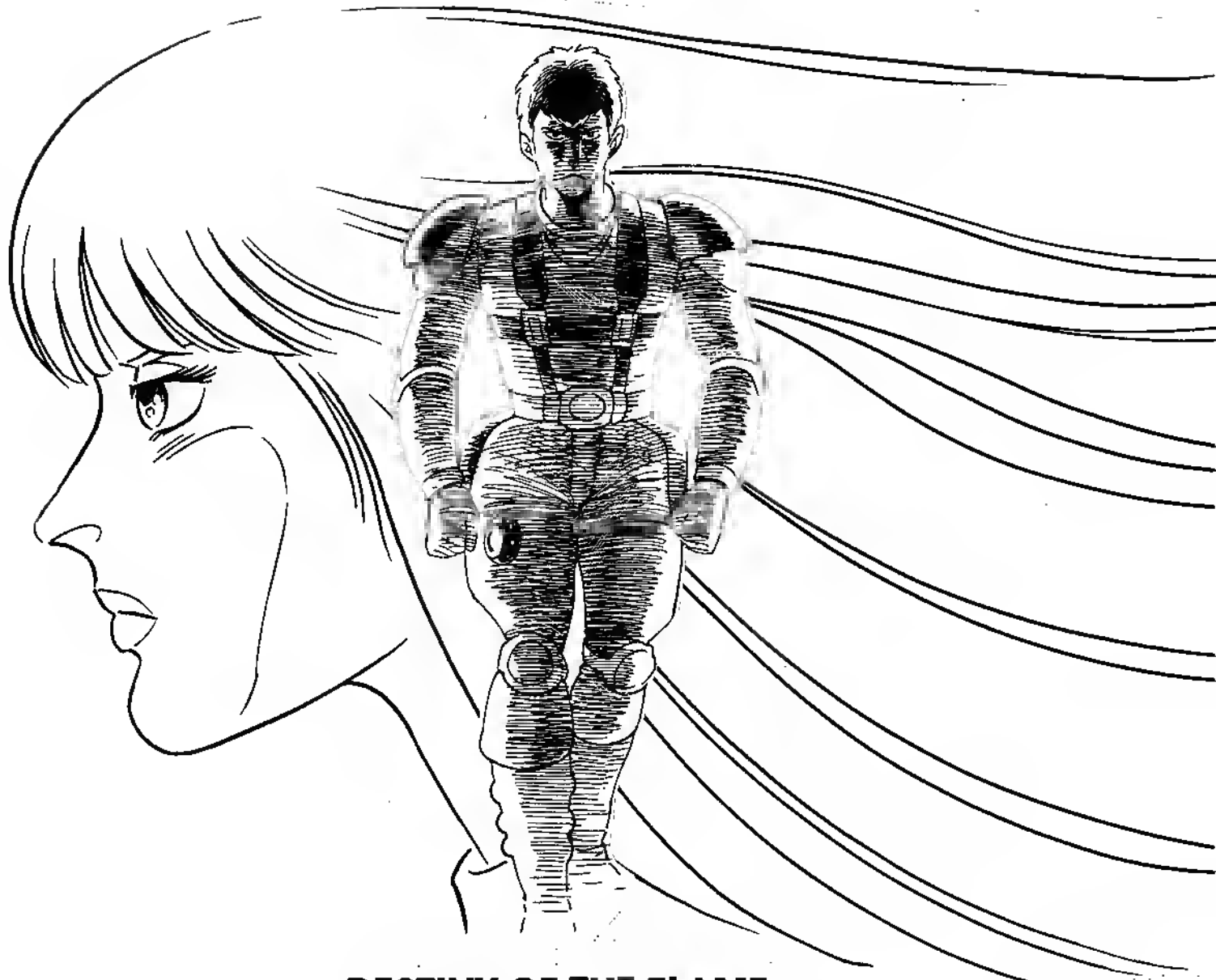
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Commentary set in italics summarizes thoughts of the English author (with the exception of those in Part 2, which are translated quotes) based on observation of the series and compared information. In cases where literal translation of story

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Comments on the VOTOMS VIEWERS GUIDE are invited, and it is the hope of the English author that the release of this book will not only provide greater understanding of one animation series in particular, but also inspire similar projects on the part of other authors and translators interested in improving general knowledge of Japanese animation and individual programs that interest them.



DESTINY OF THE FLAME

(Opening Title)

Continuing the search to find
The missing years of my life,
I wandered through a strange city
Where I chaked on the stench of flames
I'm certain we had said "Farewell"
And we definitely parted

When I view the scenes of Hell,
My heart withers away
I have grown weary of the battles I fight
If there is a destiny,
my resolutions will be clear,
All I ask is to be left alone today
Tomorrow will be another day
to continue...

I have collected the fragments of
my shattered dreams,
And I roamed about aimlessly
The flickering shadows of my nightmares
Have been raised again
I'm certain we had said "Farewell"
And we definitely parted

Whenever I see you,
my heart becomes cold
I have grown weary of the battles I fight
If there is a destiny,
my resolutions will be clear
All I ask is to be left alone today
Tomorrow will be another day
to continue...

Lyrics by Ryosuke Takahashi/Translation by Earnest Migaki

ARMORED TROOPER VOTOMS

装甲騎兵



VIEWER'S GUIDE PART 1

CHARACTERS, MECHA, AND BACKGROUND



THE ASTRAGIUS GALAXY

For thousands of years in its history, the Astragius Galaxy has been at war, as the Gilgameth and Balalant armies fight a never-ending struggle for supremacy. Also placed within the standoff is the Merukian Army, an ally with the Gilgameth side that shares technology and resources.

The story begins during the third major war between these factions, which has gone on for almost a century and has become known as the Hundred Year's War. It has reached a point of stalemate, but just as it seems it will go on forever, an armistice agreement is reached.

This cannot halt the continuing stagnation of the war-torn galaxy, however, and everyone, including the soldiers, maintains either acceptance or apathy.

It is against this oppressive backdrop that VOTOMS is placed, and by the end of the series, events will conspire to decide the very future of the Astragius Galaxy.

ARMORED TROOPERS

It is from the Armored Troopers (hereafter referred to as A.T.'s) that the series derives its name. VOTOMS stands for Vertical One-man Tank for Offense and Maneuvers. The A.T.'s were developed as a new weapon in the Balalant/Gilgameth conflict, and became so widely used that they virtually changed the history of warfare. It is the mark of a skilled A.T. pilot to use the robot as a physical extension of himself in battle.

A.T.'s are also a fairly disposable battle machine. Chirico Cuvie has no regrets about totalling one to save himself, since they seem relatively easy to come by (Gotho scrounges them together from local junkyards!)

They are manufactured by both the Gilgameth and Balalant armies and serve a variety of

scenarios by virtue of their extensive design variations. A more esoteric line of A.T.'s called Berserga are developed for the sole use of mercenaries from planet Quent, but seem slightly removed from the battlefield for no adequately explored reason.

In addition to being the most prolific A.T. designers, the Gilgameth Army was responsible for the major technological element that made them such an important weapon—the visor assembly. The sensor scopes on the face of the A.T. are directly linked to the pilot's goggle, allowing greater perception of his surroundings, thus making him far more agile in a battle situation. The A.T.'s are also individually equipped with accessories, such as hydraulic armored punch and roller dash capabilities.



RED SHOULDER BATTALION

(MDSF: Merukian Divisions Special Forces 24th Detachment X-1)

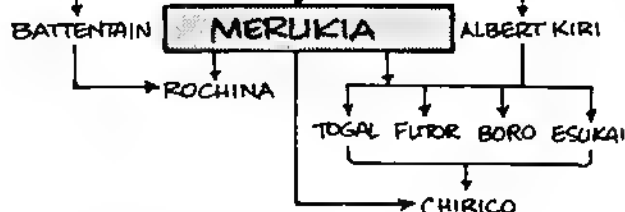
An elite group of highly-skilled A.T. pilots employed by the Merukians as a supreme strikeforce similar to green berets. Under strict orders by their superiors, Red Shoulders earned an infamous reputation as cruel, ruthless killers and the nickname 'bloodsucker squad.'

In reality, the commanding officers often used them as tools to further their own ambition. Ordering the Red Shoulders to destroy a village, city, or even an entire planet guaranteed its annihilation. The code of the Red Shoulders was unquestioning loyalty or death, so many of them became the cold machines their reputation demanded.

Now that an armistice is reached, however, Red Shoulder Battalion has officially disbanded, mainly to put an end to the atrocities it performed in the battlefield. The few surviving members are regarded with fear and respect wherever they appear.

BALALANT**WAR****GILGAMETH**

To aid in understanding the numerous political re-shuffles in the series, charts such as this one will be presented at the appropriate times. This chart depicts the chain of alignment prior to OPERATION: RID in episode 1.



PERFECT SOLDIER

A genetically-bred warrior developed by the Gilgamesh Army to act as a new super-weapon against their opposers. The first Perfect Soldier was a female named Proto-1. She awoke on the Merukian Asteroid RID and was captured by men commanded by Gilgamesh General Albert Kiri. After intense study, Kiri's Secret Society created her successor, Proto-2, using the funds stolen from the same asteroid.

The Perfect Soldier is an expert warrior in all types of combat, and is especially talented in the use of A.T.'s. They also require periodic re-energizing jijirium baths, which creates a dependency upon their masters in addition to keeping them in top form at all times.

OPERATION: RID

The secret, illegal mission masterminded by Albert Kiri of the Gilgamesh Army. In a raid on the Merukian Asteroid RID, A.T. pilots under his command stole both a huge gold stock and the freshly-created Proto-1. The leaders of this operation then defected from the Gilgamesh Army and formed the Secret Society, each taking a responsible persona to hide behind (Boro becomes a holy man, Esukai a police chief, etc.).

They go on to develop their own Perfect Soldier, Proto-2, and pursue their own greedy interests in an attempt to stake their own claim on a galaxy destabilized by constant warfare.

THE CHARACTERS

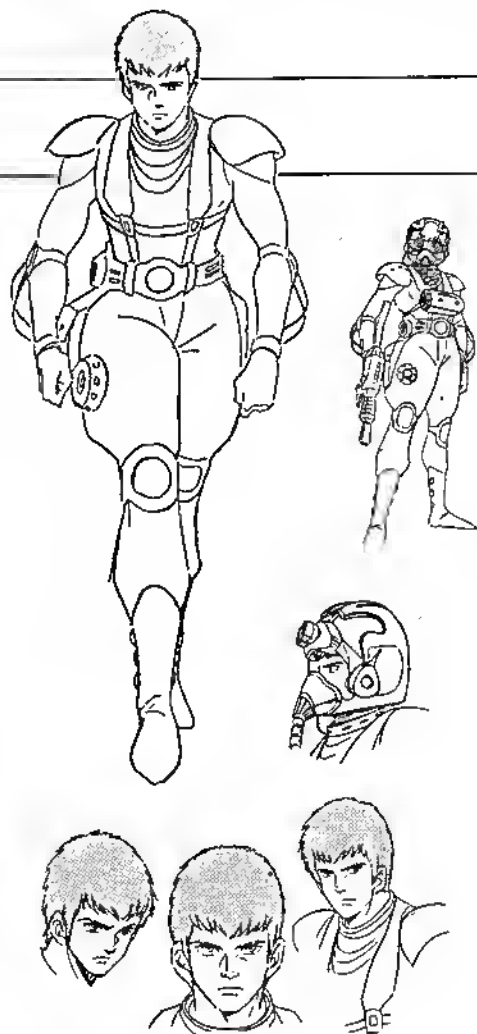
CHIRICO CUVIE

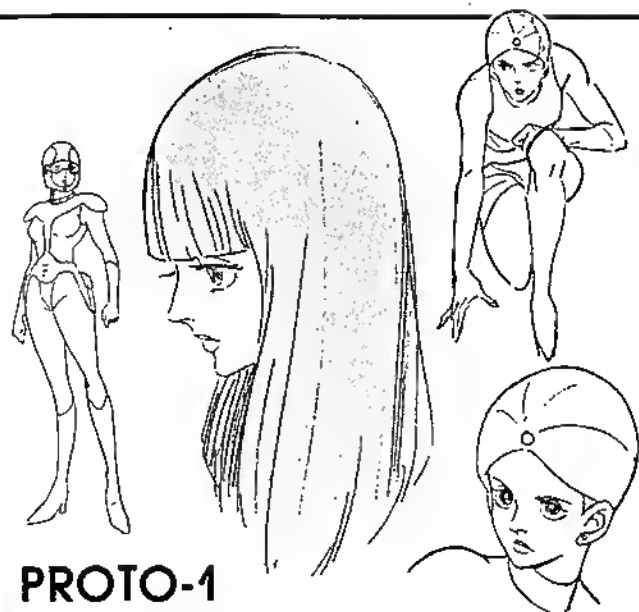
The central character of VOTOMS. Chirico is an A.T. pilot and soldier for the Merukian Army. As a member of Red Shoulder Battalion, he was an enigma and never quite 'fit the mold.' As a result, he was demoted to smaller military assignments after the disbanding, which led to his involvement in OPERATION: RID under Albert Kiri. Kiri uses this situation to have him eliminated, but Chirico survives the attempt on his life to escape with full knowledge of Kiri's actions against his own army.

The most mysterious element of Chirico's psyche is the effect the war and all its atrocities has had on him. He was never the killing machine his superiors pushed him to be, and is now haunted by violent flashbacks which he is forced to overcome as he becomes the object of pursuit.

As the series begins, no one is aware of exactly who or what Chirico is. The army has no record of his past, and likewise Chirico himself remembers nothing before his tenth year. In reality, his incredible stamina and resourcefulness are the result of his unknown heritage, the truth of which becomes his ultimate quest.

All these mysteries attract the attention of several high-ranking persons, and when Chirico deserts the Merukian Army in episode one, many parties become involved in the 52-episode manhunt.





PROTO-1

A.K.A. Fantam Lady, Fyana

The first artificially-created Perfect Soldier. When she first awoke in Merukian Asteroid RID, the first face she saw was Chirico's, and this created confusing emotions in her.

She is taken to Boro in the Secret Society, who becomes her mentor, and is eventually pitted against Chirico in battle. When she speaks to him face to face, she feels a strong attraction for him which eventually inspires her to defect from the Secret Society and join him on the run.

Because of her dependency on the jijirium bath for re-energization, this leads to dangerous conditions when she cannot find appropriate facilities, but when in top form she is an excellent, refined soldier, highly skilled in many forms of combat.

Chirico gives her the name Fyana, but to her superiors, she is known as the 'Sotai,' which can translate to 'prototype.'



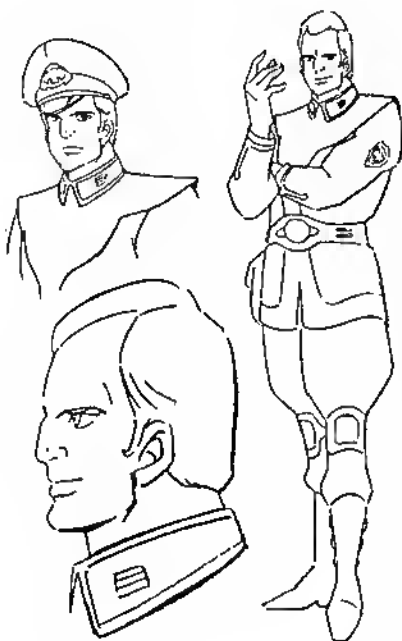
PROTO-2

A.K.A. Ypsilon

As indicated by his namesake, the second artificially-created Perfect Soldier. Under Boro's tutelage, he develops a huge ego and considers himself the next step in human evolution. His combat skills are honed to perfection, and unlike his predecessor, he remains fiercely loyal to his commanding officers.

Proto-1 was with him during his 'birth' in an underground Merukian base, and he formed an immediate attachment to her. As he 'matures,' he believes she loves him as well, but she uses her position to try and teach him kindness and guide him away from becoming a killing machine.

But her intentions are doomed to failure under his stronger programming, and when she defects, Ypsilon takes it as a personal affront, and his pursuit of Chirico becomes an obsession until their decisive showdown on Sunsa.



JAN PAUL ROCHINA

An officer in the Merukian Army who captures Chirico after OPERATION: RID and is assigned to track down the leaders of the Secret Society.

But as the series progresses, Rochina moves on to pursue his own interests, mainly observing Chirico and learning about his true nature.

This involves a complex game of capture and manipulation, which makes Rochina one of the most intricate characters in the series.



DETEL ROYLU BATTENTAIN

A Gilgamesh officer and Rochina's immediate superior. He was partially responsible for the creation of Proto-1 and watches Rochina's attempts to recover her from the Secret Society.



BRUZE GOTHO

Gotho (Goat-Oh) is a 50-year old Uodo scrap dealer on a constant search for get-rich-quick schemes. He "discovers" Chirico hiding out in his junkyard and sponsors him in Uodo's Battle Ring, a popular game involving A.T. pilots pitted against each other while spectators gamble on the outcome.

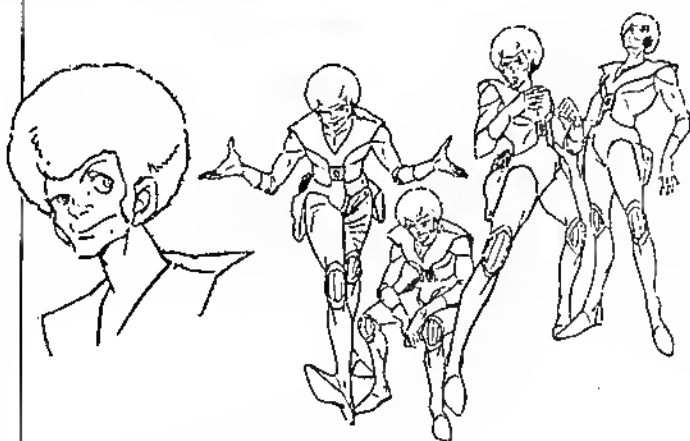
He is a cheerful optimist with a penchant for treacherous deals that land him in trouble more often than succeeding. He takes an almost fatherly interest in Chirico, and helps him as best he can.



LOU SHAKO

Shako is a Quentman, one of the legendary race of fighting men of the planet Quent, who offers his services as a mercenary at Assemble EX-10 in Kummen, where his path crosses Chirico's. Shako is something of an enigma himself, a quiet giant who provides formidable backup in his customized A.T. Berserga.

When Chirico travels to Quent in the last part of the series to search for his lost past, Shako meets him again and becomes a valuable ally as the story nears its climax.



VANILLA VARTLA

Vanilla is a brash, loudmouthed bookie whose underground connections in Uodo often make him a valuable source of information. After joining forces with Gotho and being drawn into Chirico's ongoing battle, he turns out to be a decent fighter himself, and even consents to join a mercenary army when the situation in Kummen escalates to guerilla warfare.

His enthusiasm and over-eagerness make him annoying at times, but he usually comes through for those who depend on him. His piloting skills suggest past involvement with the military.



COCONNA

Coconna grew up as a street waif in Uodo and tags along with Gotho and Vanilla, throwing in her services whenever she can. She develops a searing crush on Chirico early in the series and often has to push her reluctant companions to help him when they are needed.

She is often considered a nuisance until later episodes when she becomes useful despite her constant complaining and argumentative nature.



ALBERT KIRI

A former Gilgamesh general and the superior officer in the engineering of OPERATION: RID against the Merukians. After absconding both the Merukian gold and Proto-1, he defected and formed the Secret Society, which is bent on controlling the galaxy. Kiri also pursues a quest for ultimate knowledge and to that end, follows Chirico's progress with interest as the mysteries begin to pile up.



SELJU BORO

One of the Gilgamesh officers who masterminded OPERATION: RID. Afterward, he takes the guise of a holy man in Uoodo. He is charged with the tutelage of both Proto-1 and Proto-2, and uses both to try and kill Chirico.

Boro is a greedy, egotistical slimebag who treats his subordinates with contempt, and only sees them as tools to further his own purposes. After the destruction of Uoodo by the Merukian Army, he casts his lot with the holy king of Kummen and continues to give Chirico trouble until their final confrontation at the end of that segment.



ARON & GURAN SHUMITEL

Twin brothers and co-conspirators under Albert Kiri. They are scientists pursuing all that can be learned about the Perfect Soldier. They regard Ypsilon as a demigod and were instrumental in his creation. After observing his final battle with Chirico on Sunsa, they continue to work for Kiri and wind up in the middle of the mysteries that unfold on planet Quent.

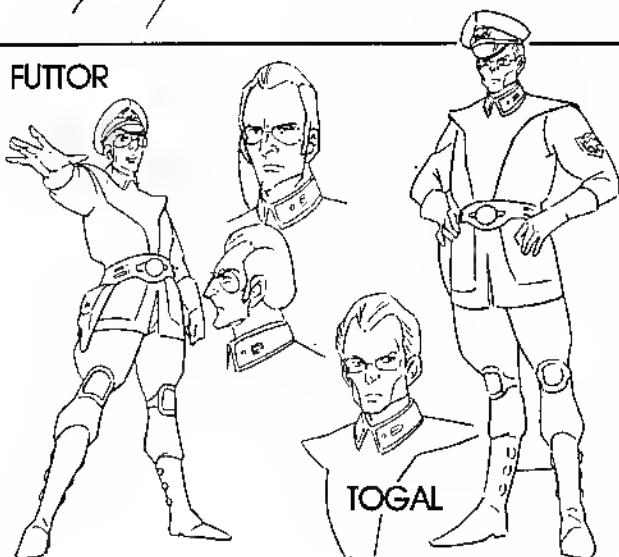
As they become more and more captivated by the secrets there, Aron develops slightly more ambition, but until that point, the only prominent difference between them is the color of their clothing: Aron-brown, Guran-green.



ESUKAI



FUTOR



SHIMKAS FUTTOR, KIDEL TOGAL, GIMAL ESUKAI

Other officers in the Gilgamesh Army who conspire with Kiri on OPERATION: RID. They take up the hunt for Chirico one by one as the series progresses.

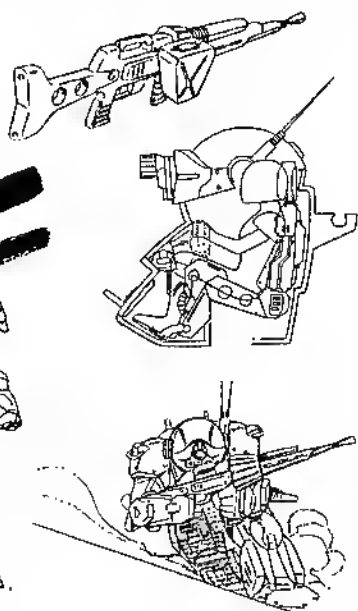
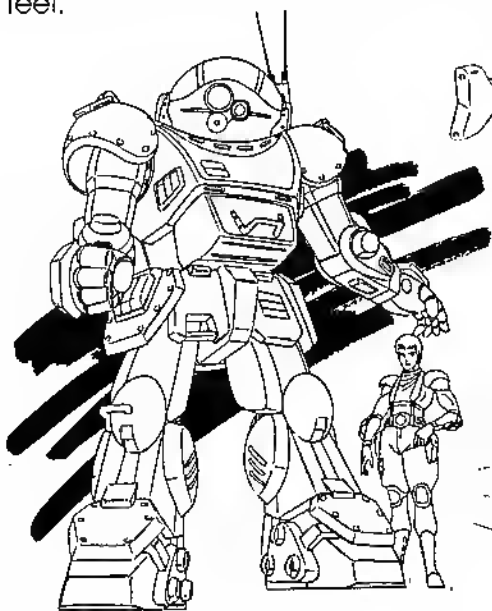
THE MECHA

GILGAMETH/MERUKIAN

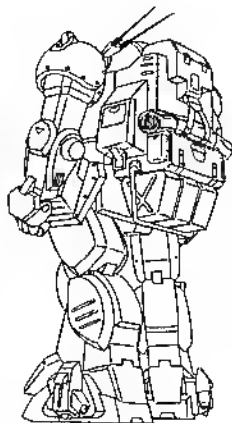
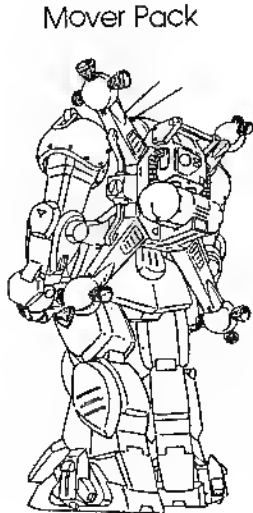
SCOPEDOG: ATM-O9-ST

Armored Trooper Mid-O9-Standard

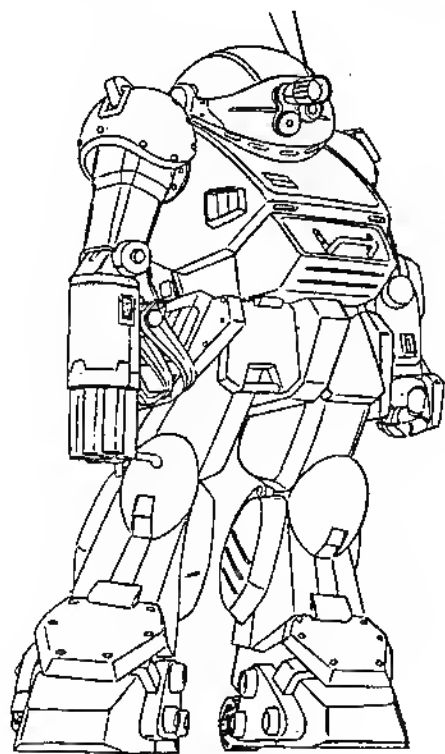
This is the basic Armored Trooper, on which all other Gilgamesh/Merukian designs are based. Scopedogs are, therefore, the most common and are almost readily available wherever the characters end up. Like all A.T.'s they are equipped with Armored Punch and Roller Dash wheels in the feet.



With Round
Mover Pack



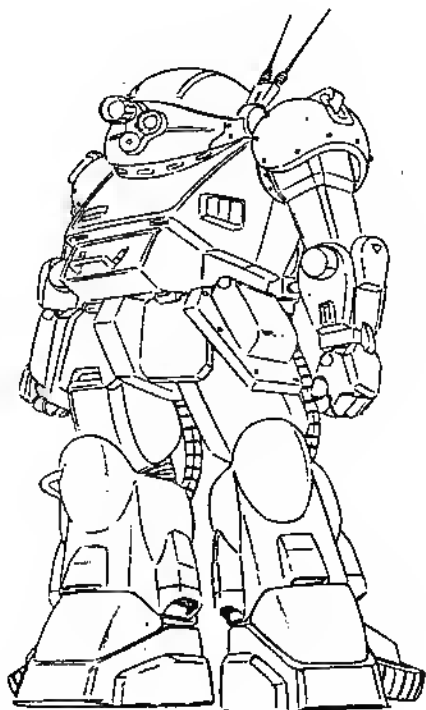
With
Parachute Pack



BRUTISHDOG: ATM-O9-GC

Armored Trooper Mid-O9-Gatling Cannon

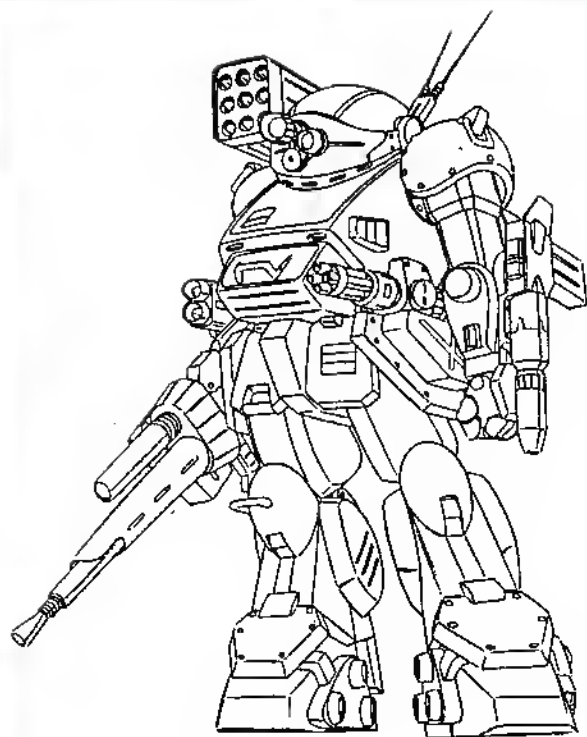
Scopedog equipped with a rapid-fire cannon on the right arm. Fyona uses them often.



MARSHYDOG: ATM-O9-WR

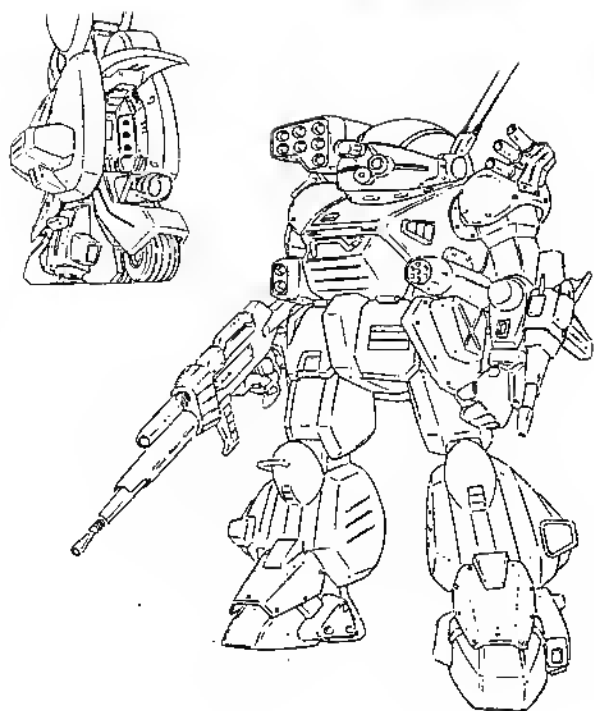
Armored Trooper Mid-O9-Water Resistant

Scopedog equipped for sub-aquatic activity. Chirico uses them throughout the Kummén episodes.



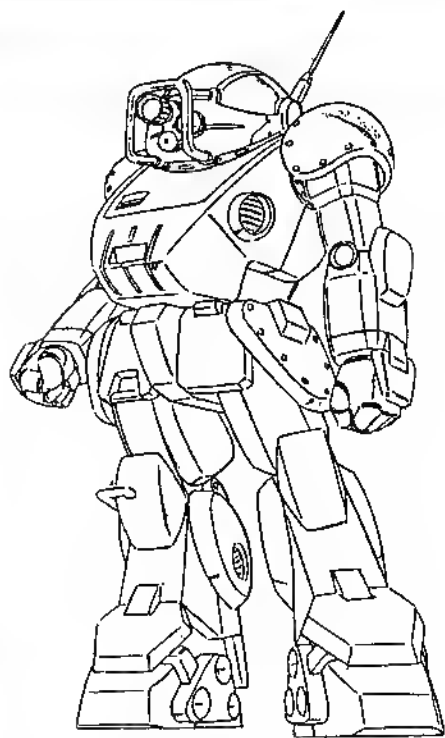
RED SHOULDER: ATM-00-RSC

Armored Trooper Mid-00-Red Shoulder Custom
Custom-built, souped-up Scopedog that
Chirico designs in the image of a Red Shoulder.



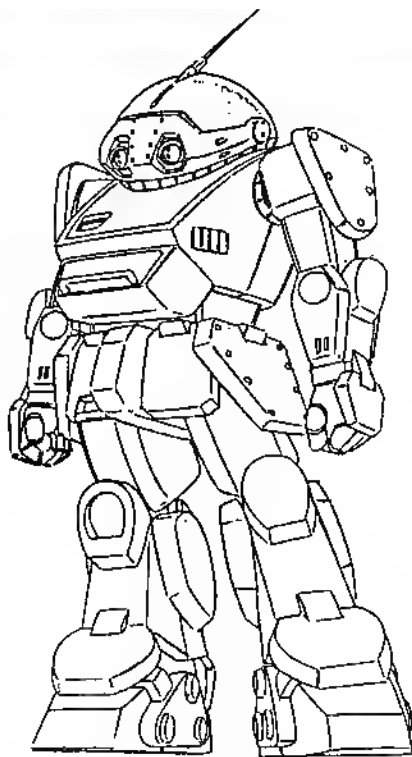
TURBO CUSTOM: ATM-09-STC

Armored Trooper Mid-09-Standard Turbo Custom
Heavily-augmented Scopedog with added
weapons packs and rocket-assisted roller dash.



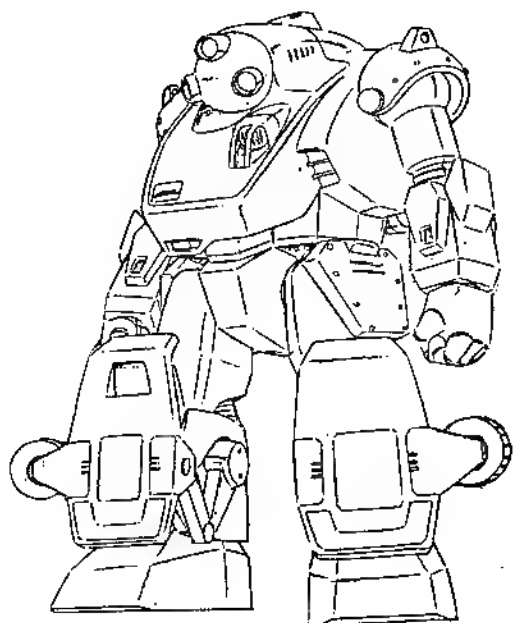
STRONG BACCHUS: ATM-09-STC

Armored Trooper Mid-09-Standard Custom
A slightly redesigned Scopedog used by
miscellaneous A.T. pilots in Uoodo.



PURPLE BEAR: ATM-09-SSC

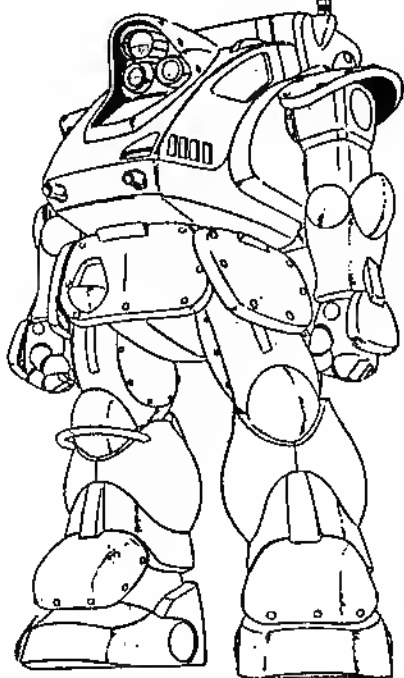
Armored Trooper Mid-09-Stereo Scope Custom
This appears in the Uoodo Battle Ring scenes.



DIVING BEETLE: ATH-O6-WP

Armored Trooper Heavy-O6-Water Proof

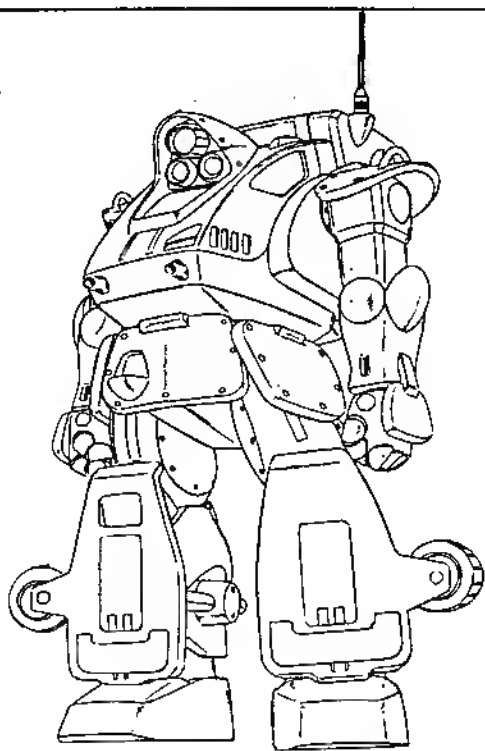
A predecessor to the Tortoise series, also designed for sub-aquatic maneuvers.



STANDING TORTOISE: ATH-14-ST

Armored Trooper Heavy-14-Standard

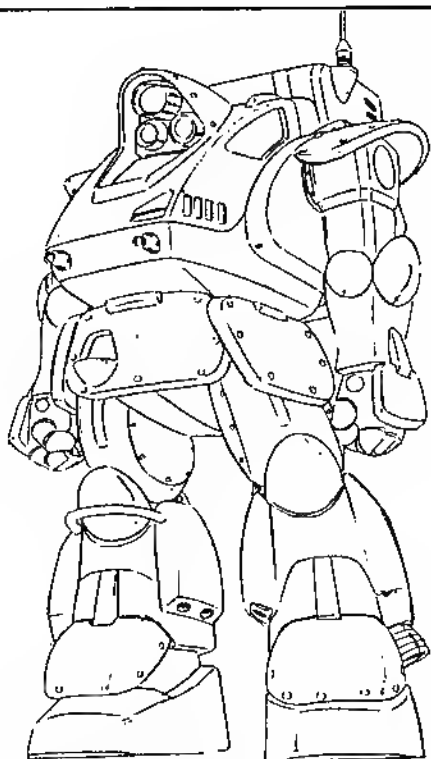
A departure from the AT-O9 series, the Tortoises are a heavier class used in rugged terrain. The Secret Society employs them in Kummien.



STANDING TURTLE: ATH-14-WP

Armored Trooper Heavy-14-Water Proof

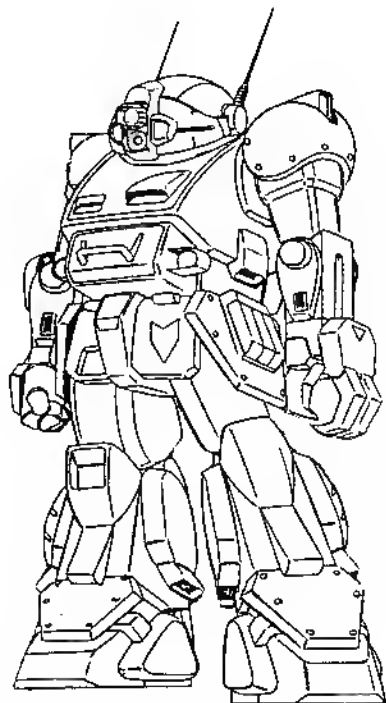
A sub-aquatic version of the Standing Tortoise. Ypsilon uses a customized model called a Snapping Turtle.



STANDING TORTOISE MK. II: ATH-O6-SA

Armored Trooper Heavy-O6-Space Assault

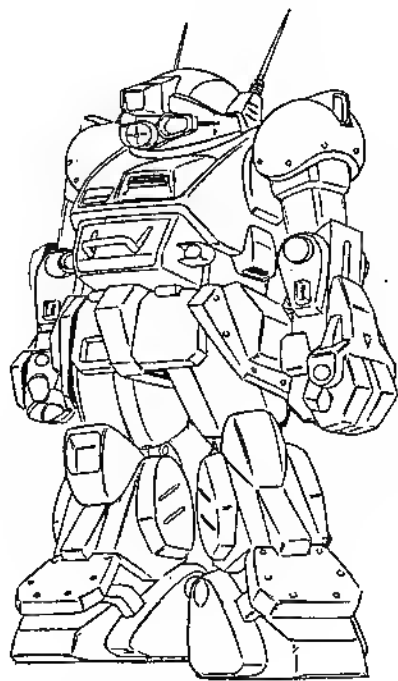
A Tortoise equipped with rocket boosters for maneuverability in zero-G situations.



STRIKEDOG: X-ATH-O2

Extra-Armored Trooper Heavy-O2

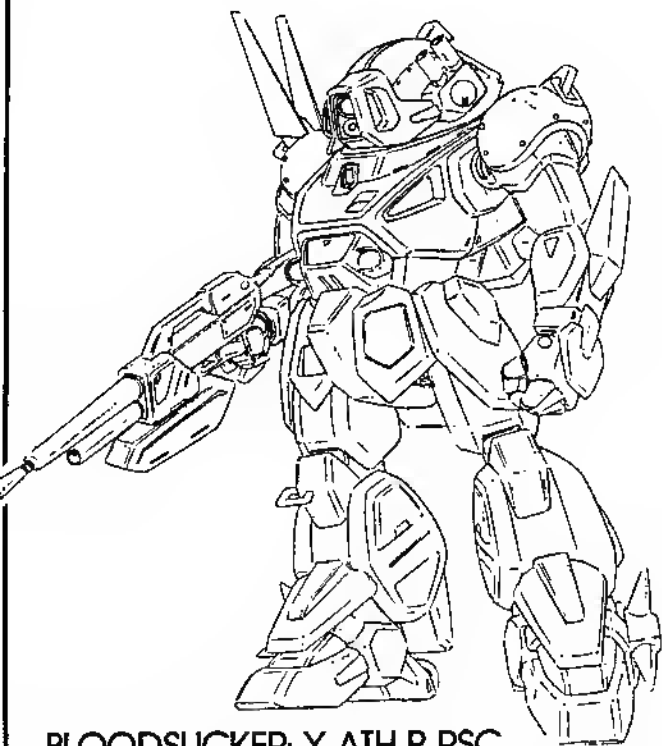
Custom-designed A.T. that Ypsilon uses in Kummen and Sunsa. It is extremely durable, and has several souped-up features, including a claw cannon on the left arm.



RABIDLYDOG: X-ATH-O2-DT

Extra-Armored Trooper Heavy-O2-Desert Type

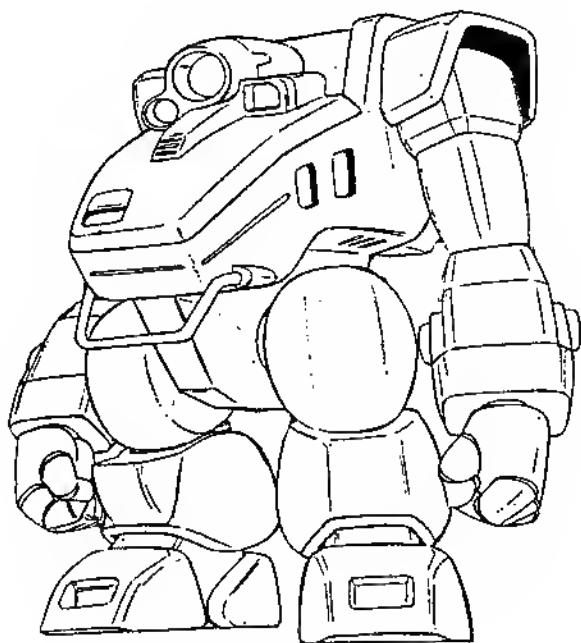
An even heavier version of the Strikedog used by Chirico on Quent.



BLOODSUCKER: X-ATH-P-RSC

Extra-A.T. Heavy-Peruzen-Red Shoulder Custom

Custom-built A.T.'s used specifically to protect Peruzen, the mastermind of Red Shoulder Battalion, who now resides in a hidden Merukian base.

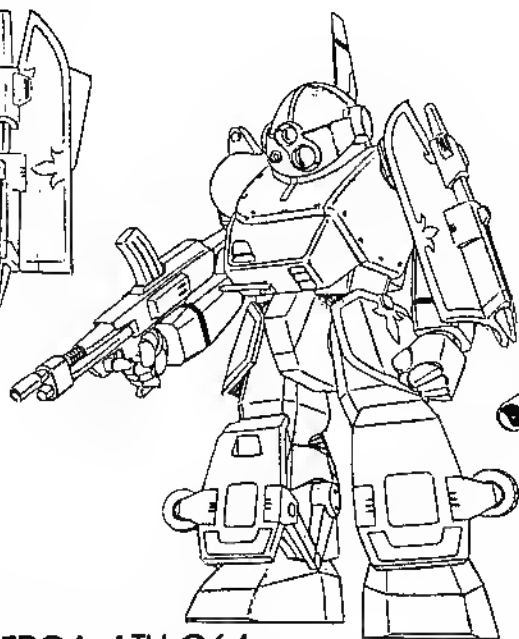
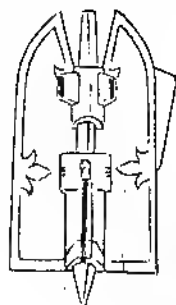


ZWERG: X-ATL-O1-DT

Extra-Armored Trooper Light-O1-Desert Type

A lighter version of the A.T. used by the Secret Society forces in Quent.

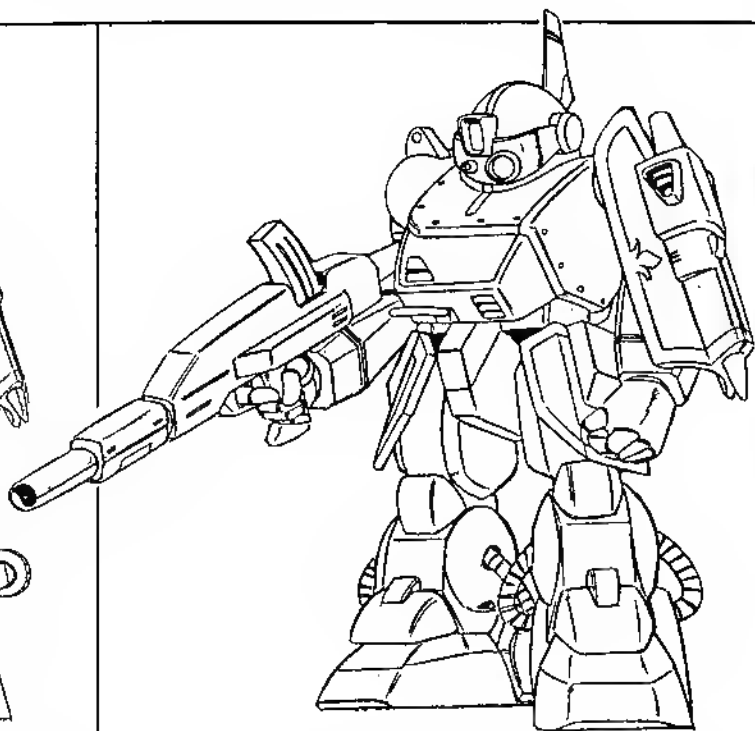
QUENT



BERSERGA: ATH-Q64

Armored Trooper Heavy-Quent 64

Designed on Quent, the Berserga nevertheless retains many of the same capabilities of the standard A.T. The major difference is the pilder in the arm shield. Shako pilots one in Kummen.

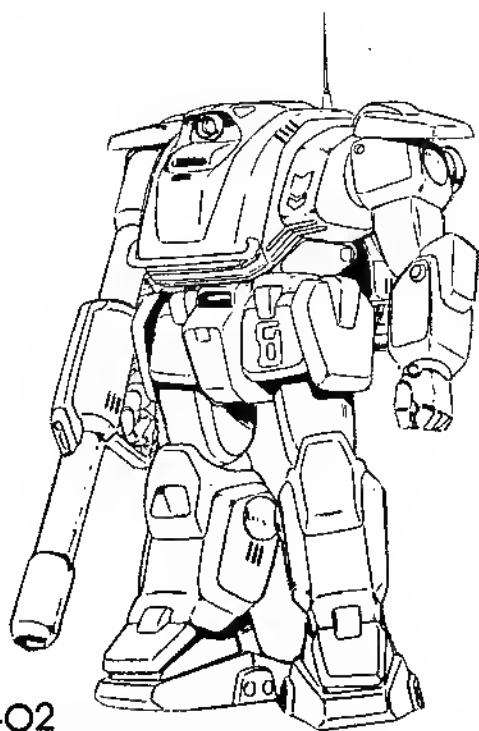


BERSERGA DT(Desert Type): ATH-Q58

Armored Trooper Heavy-Quent 58

A heavier Berserga with added roller dash capability for use in desert maneuvers.

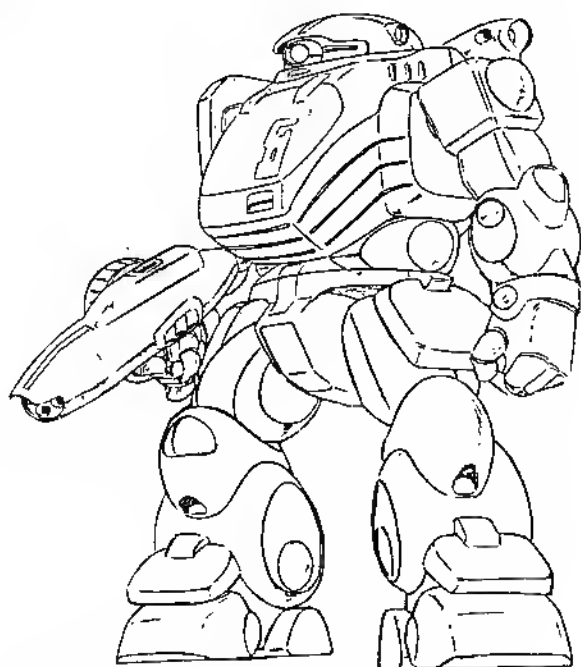
BALALANT



BATM-O2

Balalant Armored Trooper-O2

An early model A.T. developed by the Balalant Army. This glimpsed briefly in the opening narrative of episode 1.



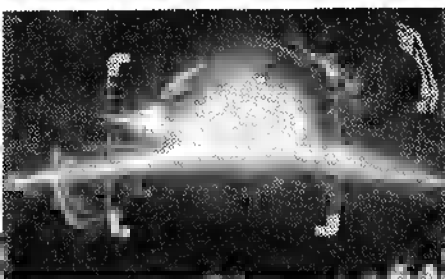
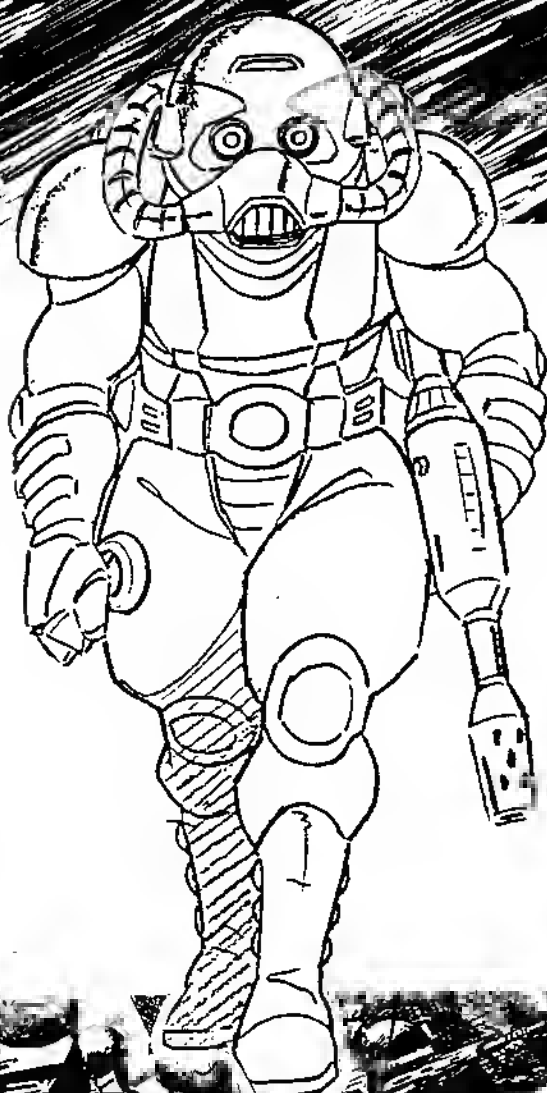
FATTY: B-ATM-O3

Balalant-Armored Trooper Mld-O3

The standard tool of the Balalant Army, who apparently do not feel a need for a wider range of A.T. designs.

The Astragius Galaxy is divided into two sides, Balalant and Gilgameth, which for reasons unknown, had a war that continued for a century. In the beginning, there were only small skirmishes, but the battlefield gradually widened until it encompassed all of the remaining two hundred worlds under the two empires.

At first, the soldiers who fought for the sake of their homeworld didn't understand the purpose of the long war. They simply fought.



ARMORED TROOPER VOTOMS

装甲騎兵

ボトムズ

VIEWER'S GUIDE PART 2

ROOTS OF TREACHERY

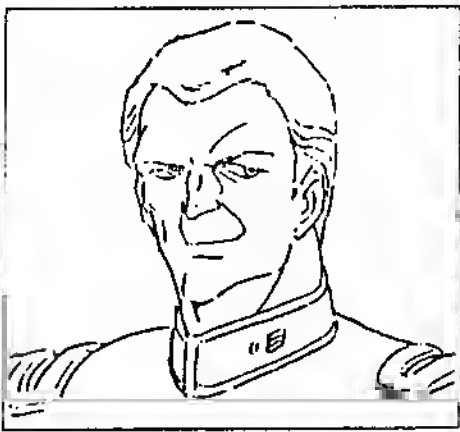
ORIGINAL VIDEO

It is fitting tribute to the integrity of the VOTOMS storyline that the last part of it to be released fits seamlessly as the first segment of this guide. ROOTS OF TREACHERY, also called RED SHOULDER DOCUMENT is actually a prequel to the television series in general and a prior video release, THE LAST RED SHOULDER in particular. This chilling segment details Chirico Cuvie's origins and his induction into Red Shoulder Battalion where the ominous mysteries of his heritage begin to unfold.

Because it was released well after the television series finished broadcasting, many of the story elements in this video were already well known and accepted by longtime viewers, so much of the standard exposition of a premier episode was discarded in favor of complex foreshadowing that answers many of the questions provoked by THE LAST RED SHOULDER and subtle plot innuendos in the series.



Image Illustrations by Norio Shioyama



CHARACTERS AND SUBMECHA



CARSON

A contidant, dedicated young recruit who Chirico helps through field initiation and joins the Red Shoulders. Despite Chirico's indifference, Carson does what he can to return the favor and pursue his own goal.



GREGORU GARROSH

A veteran Red Shoulder, Gregoru is a hulking brute of a man who is nevertheless a formidable A.T. pilot and something of a leader, at least to the extent of being more outspoken than most others.



MUZA MERRE

Another Red Shoulder A.T. pilot who almost perfectly defines the classic personality: quick-tempered, ruthless, brash, and always more eager to talk with a weapon than with words.



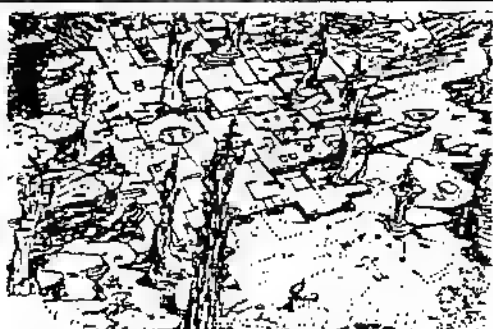
BAIMAN HAGGARD

An efficient Red Shoulder stealth specialist with a dry sense of humor and oily disposition. Baiman's cautious subtlety nicely balances his companions' attitudes, making them a sinister trio.



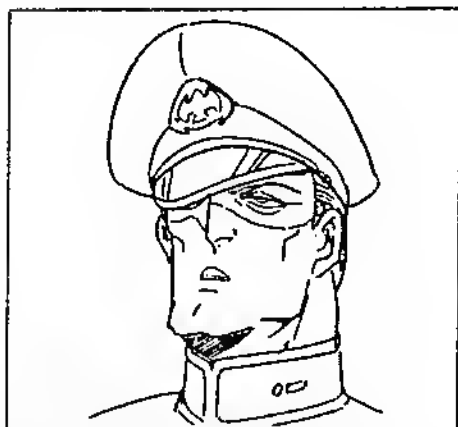
COLONEL YORAN PERUZEN

A former espionage agent and A.T. pilot for the Merukian Army, Peruzen is now regarded as one of the top military minds in the war. He is a brilliant tactician and has climbed high in ranks to establish and command the elite Red Shoulder Battalion. As with most men of his calibre, Peruzen has gained his share of enemies in his own army, jealous of his success and frustrated by the enigma of his unit. From its beginning, Peruzen insisted that the location and composition of the battalion be kept secret, and thus the only view of it seen by most other officers is statistics on field reports. Unknown to virtually everyone, however, is Peruzen's intention behind the formation of this insidious troop. And as *ROOTS OF TREACHERY* begins, that quest is about to be fulfilled.



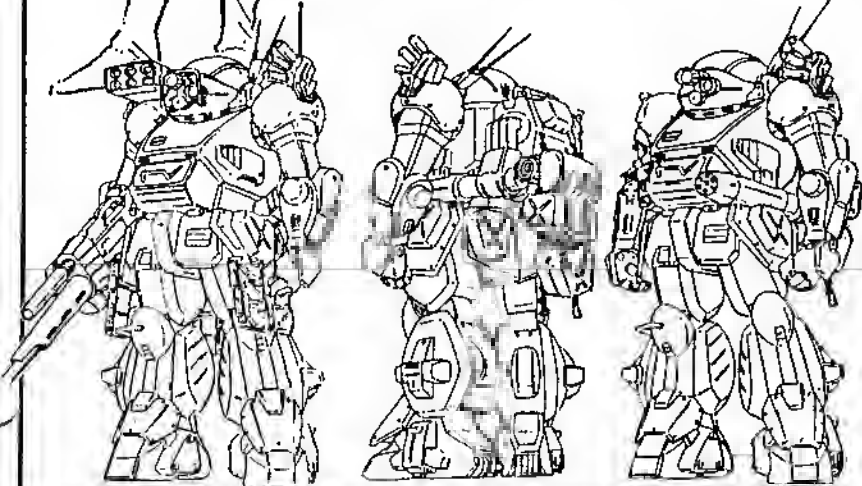
RED SHOULDER BASE

Hidden from enemy and ally alike on the desolate planet Odon, the base more closely resembles a prison than a military installation—small wonder with the type of soldier recruited into the battalion.



COMMANDER LIMAN

Affectionately known to his men as 'the Warden,' Liman is Peruzen's no-nonsense direct subordinate. He seldom leaves his observation tower, and constantly monitors the base with video cameras planted in almost every room. A highly-skilled A.T. pilot as well, he is also not above personal vendetta, and will eliminate those he deems insubordinate as he sees fit.



RED SHOULDER A.T.'s: ATM-09-STTC/SCOPEDOG TURBO CUSTOMS

ASTRAGIUS YEAR 7212.10

Inside Gilgameth territory, a task force of the Merukian Army moves its sleek drop ship into landing posture over the dusty planet Odon. It cautiously touches down and opens its belly hatch to release a contingent of A.T. carrier trucks that roll nervously out into the desert, wary of what might lie in wait.

Suddenly, a flurry of gunfire cuts across the path of the lead vehicle—enemy contact! But the 'enemy' is not an anticipated one: the A.T. attackers are Scopedogs, identical to those of the ambushed platoon in every way but one—the shoulderpods are blood red.

Elsewhere, a young man on board another Merukian space-ship looks out over the stars and broods. His name is Chirico Cuvie.

"I learned about that accident later. My transfer orders had come very suddenly. My life as an unknown Merukian soldier was about to end. I was on my way."

On another planet of the Merukians, a council of senior officers convenes at Space Army Headquarters for a strategy meeting. One officer, a thin moustached man named Rakinson, is alarmed by information just given him by Chief of Staff Neharko.

"What? All killed?"

"We are reviewing the data, but it seems our unit was attacked by over 50 A.T.'s and three minutes later there was no answer. Nothing is sure now...but we'll see what Peruzen does about it."

They speak of Colonel Yoran Peruzen, who spends the conference outlining his attack plans

of the planet Sunsa, located deep inside Balalant space.

"If there is no objection," the council speaker says, "Peruzen's plan will proceed to the top level."

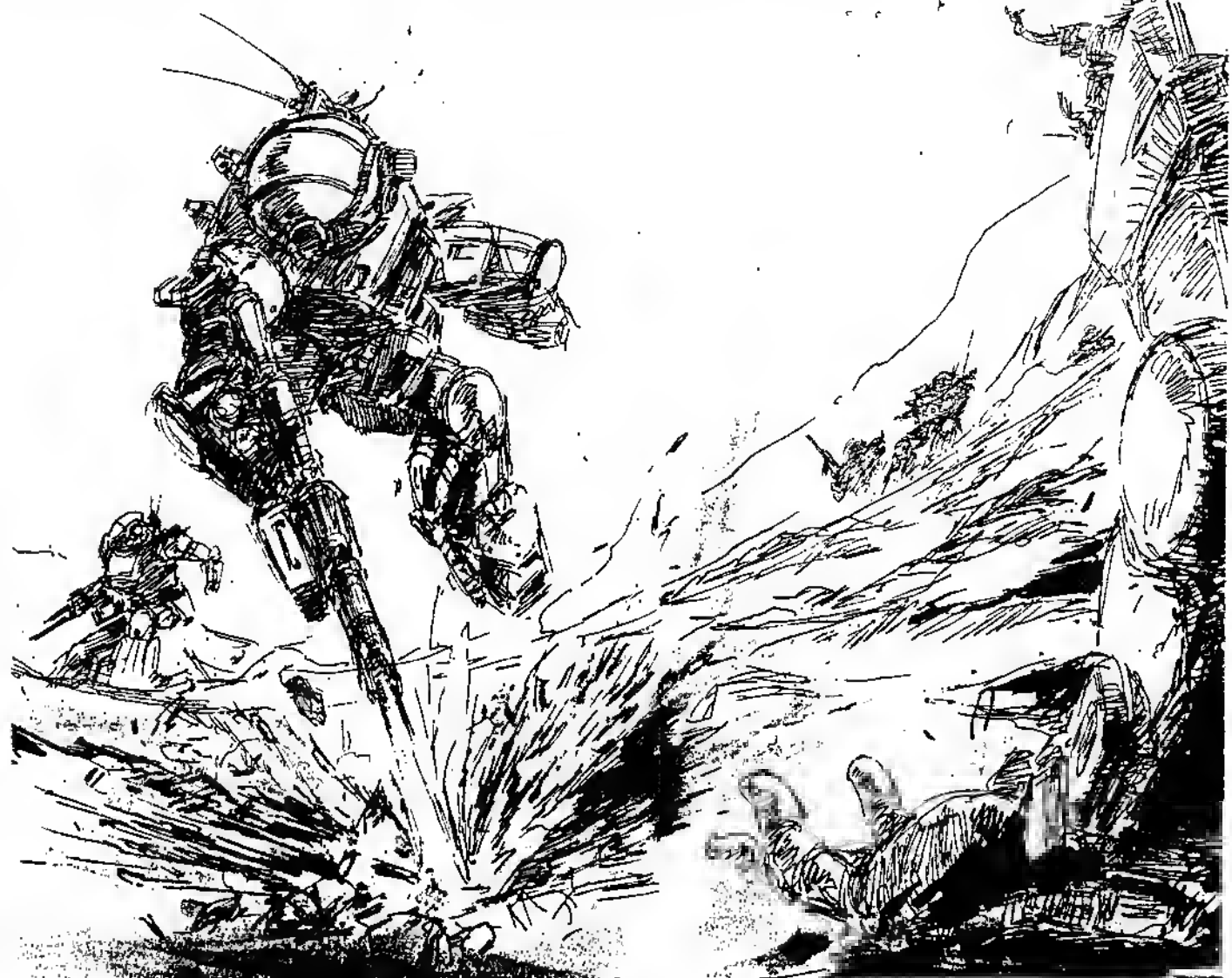
"I have an objection," Neharko announces, "not to the attack itself, but because it depends too heavily on Red Shoulder Battalion."

"I agree," Rakinson supports. "We need more information about them."

"The decision to keep our special troop a secret," Peruzen begins, "was made when that troop was approved here."

"Times have changed," Neharko argues. "Your unit has been using too much money and soldiers, and we still don't know anything about it!"

"As all previous data proves,"



Peruzen replies coolly, "our unit functions perfectly. All you need to do is put them to use."

The speaker points out that although Peruzen's Sunsa attack plan is a sound one, the Colonel's insistence on maintaining these secrets could lead to a misunderstanding.

"I don't keep secrets without reason," he answers. "Our base was just attacked by an unknown force."

Gasps arise from the council. This is ominous news.

"Balalant? Or someone else?"

"Our research will tell," Peruzen offers. "What matters is that they knew of our location and attacked. I think the situation demands that the secret should be maintained."

The house speaker addresses an angry Neharko for further comment, but none is forthcoming. Thus, the Sunsa attack plan is approved and wheels begin to turn...

"He won this time," Rakinson mutters afterward.

"But now we've found his base," Neharko points out.

"We can't let him run this army like he owns it. I'll begin the next step."

"What will you do?"

"Do you know about his ridiculous research? He's trying to find a soldier that cannot die. We'll use that to look into Red Shoulder Battalion."

Sometime later, a new dropship comes to planet Odon, and its passengers, salty Merukian A.T. pilots, trade banter about the world's foreboding appearance.

"I don't think I can leave here alive," one jokes, "but there's a guy who's dying already!"

"Hey, can't you talk," another asks the guy in question, who broods and does not answer.

"Stop," a blond soldier named Carson demands. "He's wounded! We'll get down there soon enough. Don't make it worse."

A PA announcement orders all men to the A.T. hangar to prepare for an 'aptitude' test upon landing.

Amazingly, the wounded soldier, Chirico, powers up his A.T. along with the rest and moves into the ranks that line up after the vessel touches down at their destination: Red Shoulder base.

"There is a hill to your right," another loudspeaker informs, "and your enemy is all around. Go through them and return. This is only a simulation, but don't get careless. Begin!"



With that, the Scopedogs thunder out over the rough terrain toward their goal, and the lead pilots continue to joke, even when Red Shoulders come into view.

"There they are!"

"This is all fake—let's shoot 'em up and give them a surprise!"

But then the joke ends. The Red

Shoulders are the first to open fire, and their bullets are all too real. Before anyone can react, a rain of deadly fire has sliced their point-men apart!

As the attackers tear the recruits to shreds, the commander of the base watches intently from his observation tower and listens as the casualties are counted off.

"This is no simulation," Carson shouts to Chirico. "They're serious!"

If we try to escape we'll be targeted!"

"Then we'll go through them. Follow me."

Watching from a nearby rise, three particular Red Shoulder pilots watch as Chirico breaks out of the melee with Carson in tow.

"Number five is moving well,"

Balman says.

"Seventeen is following," Muza observes.

"Heh, heh," snickers Gregoru. "Kill 'em."

But this proves harder than any expect, for Chirico evades their volleys with ease and continues toward a pair of flags which he and Carson whirl around--the finishing point.

"Numbers 5 and 17 have gone through," the base commander is informed, "but four of our A.T.'s are shooting over the line. Shall we stop them?"

He does not answer, only observes with interest as the four gang up on Recruit Number 5. Chirico's A.T. loses an arm, but he quickly demolishes one of his attackers and, with support from Carson, brings the other three to a standstill.

"Real battle right after we arrived here. This was not a test. It was cannibalism."

Having passed the test, Chirico and Carson wait in a ready room with two other graduates, one dying and the other nearly traumatized.

"All dead...this is no test...it's assassination!"

Carson introduces himself to Chirico and thanks him but is interrupted when the door opens, flooding the room with cold light and the shadows of three officers.

"Two returns," one recites. "Two others alive, one seriously wounded with no hope. Three out of 27. Better than we expected."

"GET UP," another orders. "This is Base Commander Liman!"

Liman strides silently in, surveying his new troops. His gaze levels with Chirico's and they lock stares for a tense moment. Then he turns and exits and his shrill-voiced subordinate, Makai, declares them official members of Red Shoulder Battalion.

Observed by the callous eyes of their new company, Chirico and the others march to their quarters. He relaxes in his bunk, noticing the room's unnerving similarity to a cell.

"Everything was different than I thought. This wasn't the army. It was prison."

Abruptly, a massive hand snakes out from under the cot, clamping over his mouth and flipping him to the floor. Out slides the giant Gregoru, who with Balman and Muza, lay into Chirico and drag him into a maintenance duct.

He stirs and looks coldly at them.

"We won't kill you," Balman says. "We just want to ask you something."

"We always come here for important talks," Gregoru offers. "The commander is always watching the other rooms."

"Who are you," Muza demands. "Where are you from?"

"Chirico Cuvie...Sector 21, East Ojiri, 22nd Troop."

"What did you tell the warden?"

"Warden?"

"That's what we call the commander," Balman snickers.

"He has a bad habit of sending assassins in after the men he doesn't like," Gregoru accuses.

"I'm no assassin."

"Where were you before Ojiri?"

"I've been an A.T. pilot for two and a half years."

Dragged here earlier, Carson watches as Chirico begins to tense and shake.

"What does that have to do with your past?"

"STOP," Chirico pleads, his mind filled with a violent buzzing.

"Answer me," Balman demands, but Chirico is seemingly overtaken by a seizure, his shaking hands reaching for their collective throats...

"I think he's got some disease," Gregoru observes, but the phenomena subsides and the three rise to leave, satisfied that their interrogation is over.

"Better take care of your benefactor," Balman tells Carson.

"He's not as good as we thought," Muza sneers.

"They were those three A.T. pilots," Carson says as he helps Chirico to his feet and back to his room. "They asked me about you."

"That fit...happens every time I'm asked about my past. I'm all right now."

Watching from one of his numerous monitors, Liman comments on the strange soldier.

"I'm not sure if he's the one, but Peruzen chose him."

"I can't believe he'd have such ability," Makai says.

"Me neither."

Two months pass, filled with gruelling field training, none of which Chirico participates in. Although the training is purely voluntary, Liman still expresses frustration to Colonel Peruzen when he visits for an inspection tour.



"Chirico doesn't join practice or even leave his room! Some of the men think he's getting special treatment. He's a detriment to the unit if this persists."

"Liman," Peruzen replies, "is that all? I told you about Chirico from the beginning."

"You want me to leave him as he is?"

"Just keep watch on him."

"The best army is made by constant practice. Those are your own words. Now you're saying ability doesn't matter? Even if he had ability, he also has a defect. He's

still not suitable for the army!"

"You haven't seen his ability yet, I need to find the man who is truly superior."

Peruzen's mind drifts back to a time when he was a spy in the army, nearly twenty years ago. Sneaking through an unknown installation, he witnessed an eerie sight: an infant, sleeping inside a womb-like mass of tissues in a glass tube. Disturbed by the abomination, he activated a destruct mechanism that blasted a wall out of the chamber, yanking the baby into dead vacuum where it did the impossible.

It opened its eyes and looked at him.

"I watched a miracle," he concludes to Liman.

After Peruzen takes his leave, Liman orders his top men to the observation tower, including Muza, Baiman, and Gregoru, who offers a sassy greeting.

"Well Warden, how ya doin'?"

"This is not a prison," Makai bleats. "Call me commander!"

"So what do you want us for?"

"Seems we don't have to care about our lives," Baiman smirks

"I've treated you well," Liman declares. "You know that Peruzen is looking for a man who has extraordinarily good luck to join the Red Shoulders."

"Because of that," Gregoru interrupts, "I've been in this prison for six years."

Ignoring the retort, Liman informs Gregoru that his good luck has been surpassed by the man who now appears on a nearby screen: Chirico.

"Him? He's just a sick man."

"It's true, he has some kind of disorder, but Peruzen chose him personally."

"Why," Gregoru asks. "His record isn't that great."

"After long analysis," Liman explains, "surprising things come out. Calculating from the death rate of the troop in which he was put, his survival rate has been almost miraculous."

"But he was wounded," Gregoru

reads from the data, "in the battle of Excuva. His hip. That's a three-month recovery."

"That aside," Liman continues, "he was also exceptional at the rate of being wounded at all. But look at the medical data."

The men do, then gasp in wonder. Chirico's hip wound healed in seven days, and he went right back into battle!

"It must be a mistake," Muza insists.

"Peruzen has rechecked all the data. That's what makes Chirico unusual."

"You mean, he's immortal," Gregoru gasps.

"At least very near to that."

"Give me a chance," Baiman brags, "and I'll show you he isn't!"

"That's what you're here for."

"The 21st dock is about to be demolished," Makai says. "Take care of him there."

"So you've planned the whole thing," Baiman smiles. "But it won't take that much for just him."

"You think so," Liman challenges. "I'm afraid you'll need a lot of luck to survive this one."

"NO," Gregoru retorts. "We've been surviving on skill!"

Arming themselves with a complement of heavy weapons, Gregoru, Baiman and Muza make a beeline for Chirico's quarters and hurl a grenade inside—but he is not there. A further search reveals him in the library. Muza bursts in and opens fire, sending him sprinting away and the chase begins.

Tossing all stealth aside, the three heard him toward the dock area, where Carson appears and fires on them to allow Chirico to duck into hiding.

"Gregoru," Carson shouts, "why do you want to kill Chirico?"

"I just want to prove he can die like a normal man!"

"Can you hear me, Chirico," Baiman yells to his quarry, "your luck has kept you alive so far...but not this time!"

He lobbs another grenade and Chirico is off again to duck into yet

another alcove. Above him, Carson appears and drops to his side.

"They know something about you that you don't," he pants. "Doesn't that bother you?" While they talk, Baiman sneaks up to take them from above.

"Your file is in the information center," Carson continues. "Your entire past is there! Why are you afraid of it?"

The other two open fire again to distract their prey from Baiman, who deftly leaps down and knocks out Carson. Rushing in, all three pummel Chirico into submission and hurl him against the wall.

"Took a long time," Gregoru mutters and fires his pistol to end the hunt. Inexplicably, he misses! Chirico slumps forward and they angrily shove him back. Gregoru raises the gun again, this time held closer—and shoots.

Before their eyes, Chirico dodges the bullet at point blank range and it slams harmlessly into the wall!

There is a moment of stunned shock, and Muza swings up his rifle to fill Chirico's body with lead, but the weapon only fires wild and clatters to the floor!

"It can't be," Liman gasps, watching from the tower. "WHAT IS IT," he shouts over the dock's P.A. "HURRY UP AND KILL HIM!"

"As you saw," Gregoru shrugs, "he doesn't die!"

"If you can't do your job, then I WILL!" The entire dock begins to rumble and tear apart when Liman sets off the detonators.

"He was planning this all along," Gregoru growls, and reaches down to pick up Chirico, reasoning that if they stick with him, they're less likely to die as well!

Carson recovers and follows them out of the exploding room, and Chirico pries himself out of Gregoru's grip.

"You might be more than I thought," the big soldier says. They soon reach the A.T. hangar and overpower the pilots there just as the alarm is sounded. Rising to the surface, Chirico roars away in his Scopdog. The first order of business is to disable Liman's

tower, which he does.

"Is he crazy," Musa gasps.

"No," Gregoru answers. "He's broken their eyes. Now they can't watch us!"

More Scopedogs emerge from the base and, lacking any clear target, open fire on each, throwing the entire area into absolute chaos! Liman's only solution is to unleash the automatic defenses as well and call in the second army to mop up.

Pandemonium reigns long into the night until helicopters swoop in to bomb the survivors to bits, allowing Liman and his officers to restore order. Their first discovery is a shocking one—the information center was heavily damaged, amounting to an almost complete loss of data.

Out in the desert, Gregoru, Baiman and Muza relax and wonder what will come of this.

But elsewhere, Chirico and Carson have hidden themselves in a canyon, only to be spotted by more helicopters and chased again. They end up in the middle of a huge valley, where the worst of it lies in wait: wave upon wave of A.T.'s surround them from above, all lined up to annihilate them at last.

"Shall we go into them," Carson hazards.

"No use," is his only answer. And a long, silent moment passes.

Finally, Carson blasts away at one of them, but no retaliation is coming! Chirico taps into the radio band to learn why.

"Do not fire at Chirico! This is the order of Colonel Peruzen!"

Shortly afterward, Peruzen's cruiser lands him on the smoking base where a jeep waits to collect him, and Liman greets him via radio.

"Chirico started this turbulence, but he isn't the man you say he is! He had no bullets or food—all he could do this time was die! He survived because of your interference, not any special ability!"

"That will be included in his survival record," the Colonel replies,

"independent of his ability. He lived because of my time of arrival here. That's part of what makes him unique."

In a dark cell, Chirico rests, exhausted, and is introduced at last to Colonel Peruzen, who eyes him respectfully.

"It was I who sent you here," he begins. "I've been trying to develop the perfect army, and learned that even the best leadership cannot surpass the greatest human ability. That's why you are here. You are the Supreme Survivor."

"Supreme?"

"Sometimes a person is born with a higher survival ability than others. I named him the Supreme Survivor. There is only one out of 25 billion people. Think of an army of these men. These are the real Red Shoulders. Guaranteed to live."

"How," Chirico asks, "can you build an army with just one man in that many?"

"It is possible to reproduce a body with today's science. That's why I've been studying you."

Chirico gasps in reply.

"You joined the army when you were sixteen. You were wandering, and ended up in a Merukian refugee center, as you remember. But what matters is the time before that."

As before, Chirico's body starts to tremble and he tenses up.

"You don't know how I've longed to study that."

"Stop!"

"You reject your past, but if you don't accept it, you cannot be released from its pain!"

"STOP," Chirico screams, the buzzing now filling his brain.

"It will end if you listen to me! I'll tell you about your birth! It was—"

In a flash, Chirico leaps from his seat, clamps his hands around the Colonel's throat, and tackles him in a deathgrip! Peruzen begs him to stop, but the young soldier is now overwhelmed by his madness, all trace of humanity gone.

And before Peruzen's eyes, Chirico speaks, his mouth moving to form the words of the Supreme

Survivor...words Peruzen cannot hear.

Slowly, painfully, he plants his pistol against Chirico's chest and fires.



Chirico slumps, lifeless.

Later, Peruzen walks sullenly back to his ship, heavy with disappointment.

"We won't punish the others," Liman says. "We can take care of them on Sunsa."

"I've been dreaming for so long," Peruzen answers quietly. "But there is no Supreme Survivor."

"I understand how you feel."

Elsewhere, Carson, Gregoru and the others hold silent vigil over Chirico's corpse in the morgue.

"So sudden," Gregoru laments.

Carson leans forward to examine the gunshot wound and recoils in surprise.

Chirico's heart begins beating.

And he opens his eyes.

On his cruiser, Peruzen ponders the report sent to him by Liman.

"It's unbelievable. The bullet just missed his heart. I have little doubt that he is the Supreme Survivor. But you may have missed because you wanted to."

"Chirico is too dangerous," Peruzen concludes, and remembers another time he witnessed a miracle of Chirico's youth. Ten years ago, Peruzen lead an assault to destroy a Balalant research facility. Chirico's adopted family was there, and as the Red Shoulders slaughtered all around him, Chirico stood within a wall of fire and stared piercingly at Peruzen's A.T.



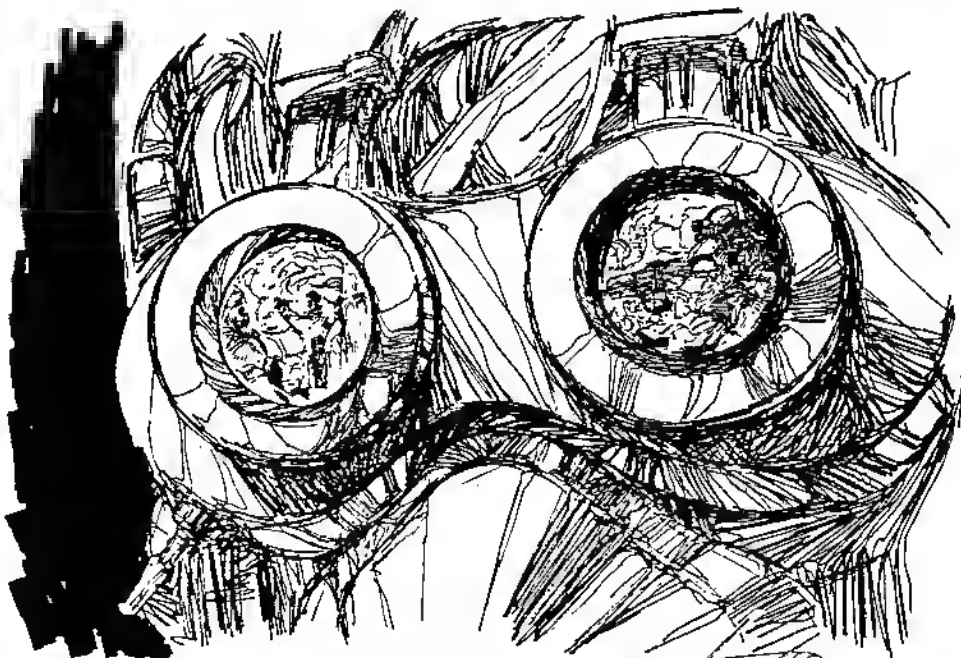
"I wasn't wrong," the Colonel realizes, "but I cannot forgive him."

ASTRAGIUS YEAR 7213.2

"After one week, I recovered as usual. The next day, Red Shoulder Battalion attacked Planet Sunsa."

Peruzen was doing. Go...and remember your past..."

Sadly, Chirico turns and plunges back into the battle. Before long, something catches his attention—a Scopedog with long antenna fins protruding from its shoulderpod. Liman.



Chirico, Carson, Gregoru, and the rest have the luck of being in one of the lead dropships, and are soon thrust into the most savage conflict of the Hundred Year War. Balalant A.T.'s try desperately to defend their territory, and the once sparkling world is soon burned by war into a sea of blood and flames.

"This place," Chirico says, "I've seen it before!"

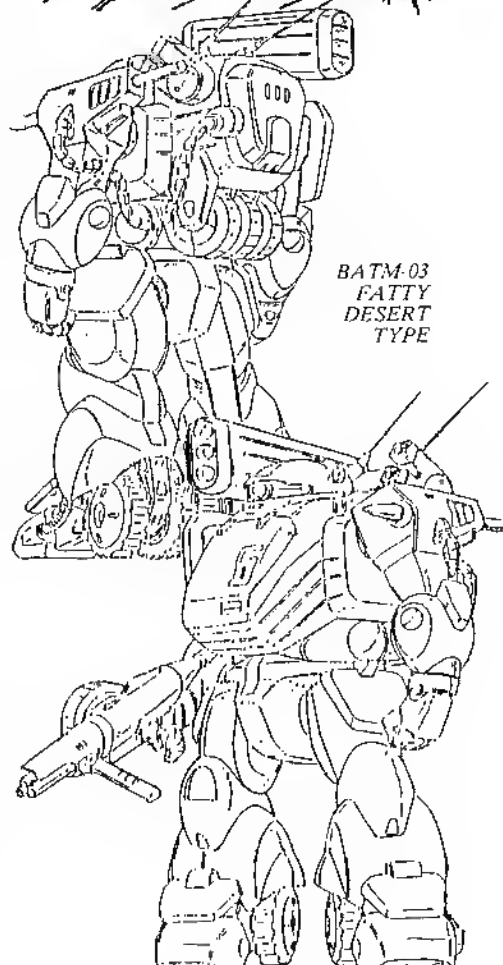
"But it's your first time here," Carson protests.

"No. I'm sure of it!" Chirico remembers standing in a wall of fire as Red Shoulders marched toward him.

"Your memory is coming out! Make it certain!"

But Carson's Scopedog is hit by enemy fire and crashes to the ground. Chirico wheels around only to watch helplessly as his comrade begins to die.

"It's all over for me...but I want to tell you...I said I wanted you to see your file...but there wasn't one. I was after documents on Red Shoulder. I wanted to learn what



BATM-03
FATTY
DESERT
TYPE

"This time it's my turn to test you!"

The two open fire on each other at last, beginning the most intense running battle either has seen. Liman's troops march to overwhelm Chirico, conjuring up visions of the wall of fire.

"He can't be immortal," Liman growls, "he can't! Not if he's human!"

A shot shatters Chirico's visor, and his mind is filled with a buzzing and a blinding light.

"The battle ended after three days. The history of Sunsa was over, and I survived. Reliving the past here was a part of Hell."



The Sunsa attack a success, the Merukian Army enjoys a victory parade some days after. The staff officers line up to watch their men and machines roll by.

"The war is almost over," Rakinson whispers to Neharko. "A negotiation now will go in our favor. The victory over Sunsa will surely earn Peruzen a promotion."

"What have we learned?"

"The information from Carson is very revealing. This time we have Peruzen for certain."

Finally, the last vehicles come into view and another officer murmurs in anticipation.

"Now at last he will show the Red Shoulders. He must be very proud."

Standing at the end of the line, Peruzen relishes the display until the last soldier on the last vehicle comes into sight.

Chirico Cuvie's mouth moves, forming the silent words of the Supreme Survivor.



STORY NOTES

The Gilgamesh invasion of Planet Sunsa brings about a major event in the VOTOMS storyline. Later information suggests that despite their technological advances, the Gilgamesh are often outfought, at least to the point of stalemate, by the Balalant Army. By concentrating increased pressure on Sunsa, the illusion of greater strength could be created, and the advent of a peace treaty afterward would become obvious.

It is probable then, that Peruzen used the Sunsa situation to have Red Shoulder Battalion commissioned, so that he could simultaneously serve his army and pursue his own goal of finding the Supreme Survivor.

After this part of the story, a truce is indeed signed and the Hundred Year War officially ends. Red Shoulder Battalion will then be disbanded, partially out of deregulation by the army, but also to disperse any embarrassment that could be traced back to Peruzen as a result of their ruthless field actions.

But before the army is reduced to only its skeletal components, another officer has a plot to execute: Albert Kiri. Between the end of ROOTS OF TREACHERY and episode 1 of the TV series, Chirico is transferred to Kiri's unit along with unofficial orders to eliminate him at when the best opportunity arises.

Hence, Chirico's drama begins.

ARMORED TROOPER VOTOMS

装甲騎兵

ボトムズ

VIEWER'S GUIDE PART 3

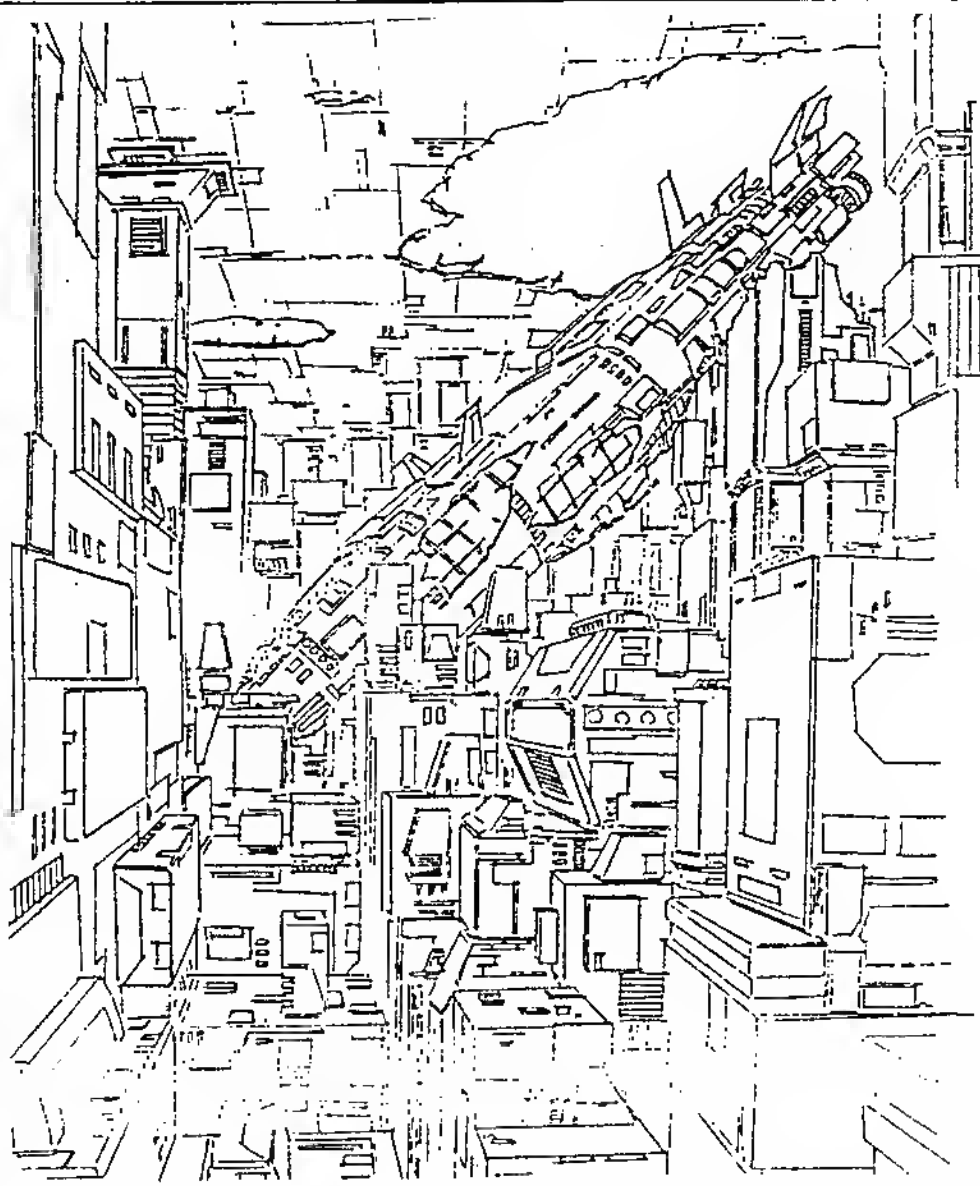
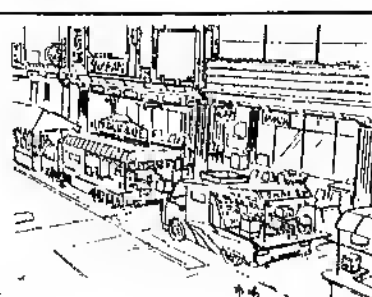
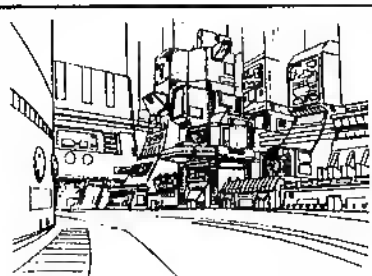
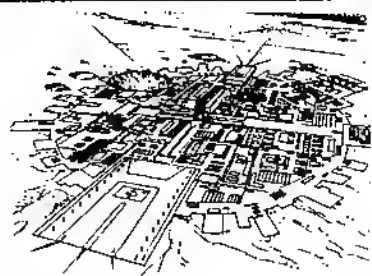
UODOO

EPISODES 1-13

Uoodo is an overpopulated, overpolluted, overdecayed city of depravation located in the underground sections of an abandoned Merukian base that was once hit by a battle-torn space cruiser that remains permanently lodged in its impact point. Numerous smaller settlements and a police heliport surround Uoodo on the surface of the planet, but still fall victim to the toxic rains produced by unchecked pollution rising from the city. Air traffic is received on the still-intact runways on the city "roof".

Although Uoodo is an entirely unsavory place, it remains heavily populated and serves as an excellent base of operations for the Secret Society. It is into this contemptuous hive that Chirico Cuvie wanders after his defection from the Merukian Army following OPERATION: RID.

These episodes start at a brisk pace and slow down considerably when it becomes necessary to emphasize character relationships and establish factions. As a result, the Uoodo episodes as a whole move slower than the rest of the series, but much important groundwork is laid for the events to come.



CHARACTERS AND SUBMECHA



ORIIYA

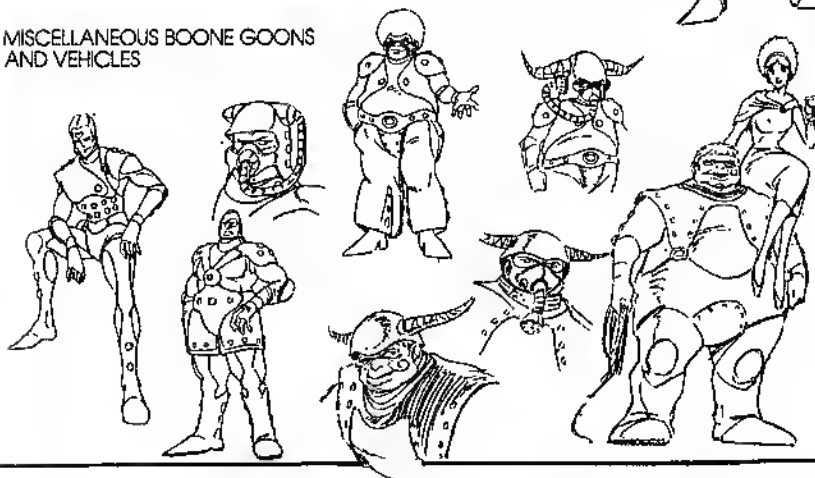
Field commander on OPERATION: RID. He functions as Boro's bodyguard in Uoodo and is sent after Chirico when the Secret Society discovers he is still alive.



KONIN

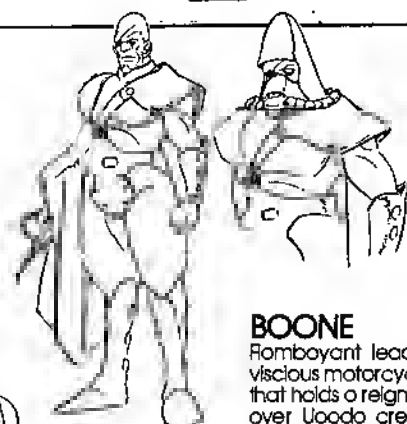
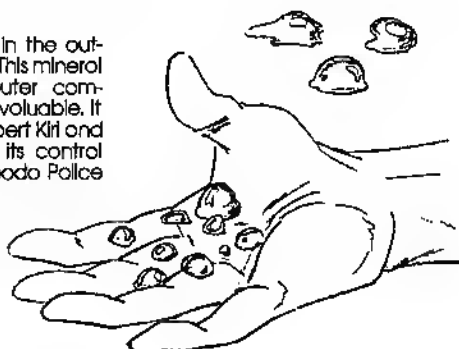
Oriya's co-commander on OPERATION: RID and Esuka's physical extension. He is ordered to kill Chirico and almost succeeds. Later, he spots Chirico alive in Uoodo and attempts to finish the job.

MISCELLANEOUS BOONE GOONS AND VEHICLES



JIJIRIUM

A valuable crystal found in the outback surrounding the city. This mineral is chiefly used in computer components and is extremely valuable. It becomes an interest to Albert Kiri and he orders Esuka to cap its control once in the position of Uoodo Police Chief. Jijirium is also particularly useful to the Secret Society for reasons that become clear in episode 6.

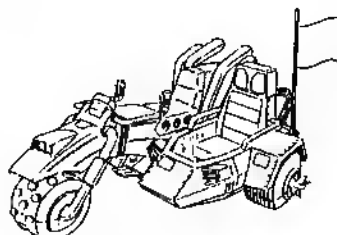
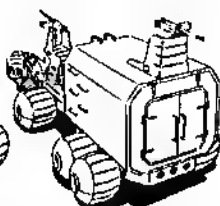
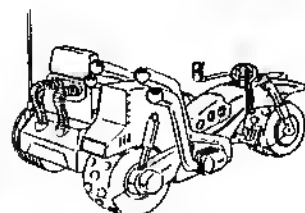
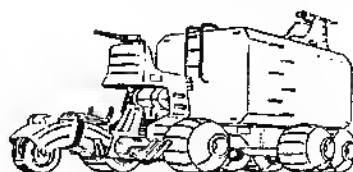
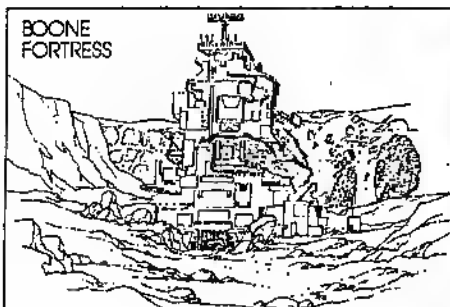


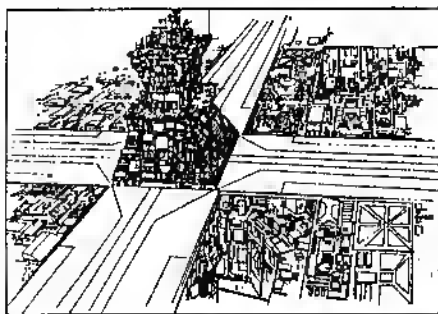
BOONE

Romboyant leader of a vicious motorcycle gang that holds a reign of terror over Uoodo created by frequent raids for human captives. These captives

are then brought to the Boone fortress outside the city to mine for Jijirium which is then sold to the authorities. Until Chirico's arrival, the Boone gang goes unchallenged and even bargains with the Uoodo Police Chief to maintain its operation.

BOONE FORTRESS

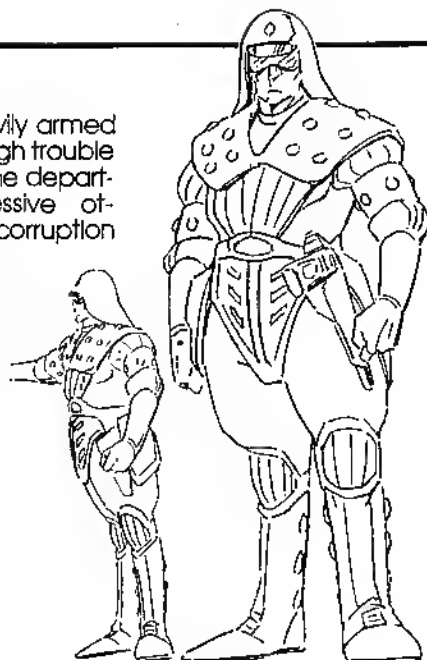




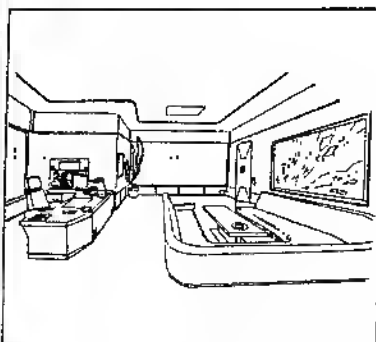
POLICE TOWER
(ABOVE GROUND SECTION)

UODOO POLICE

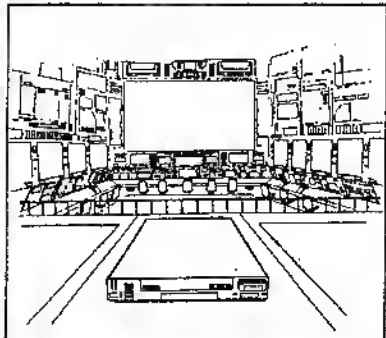
The Police Force of Uoodo is heavily armed and gives Chirico more than enough trouble once Esukai takes command of the department. They create an oppressive atmosphere over the citizens, but corruption runs deep through the force. Many of them are beligerently "on the take" and sometimes inadvertently provide Chirico's group with valuable information.



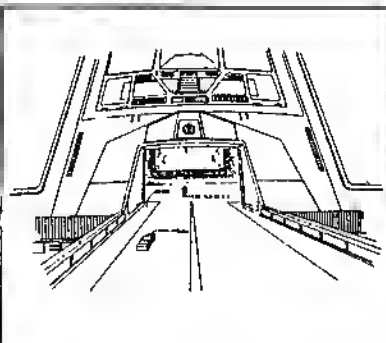
POLICE CHIEF'S OFFICE



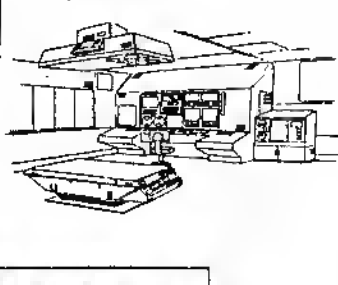
CONTROL CENTER



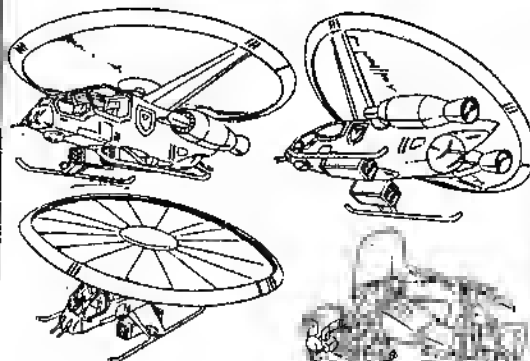
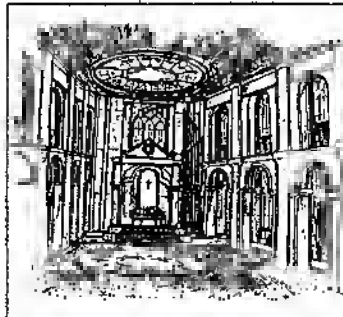
MAIN ENTRANCE



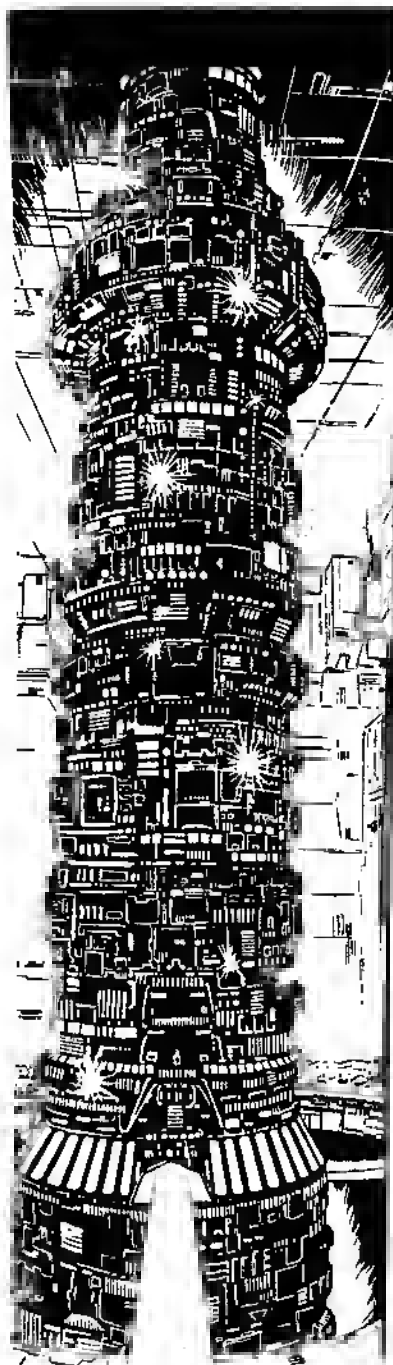
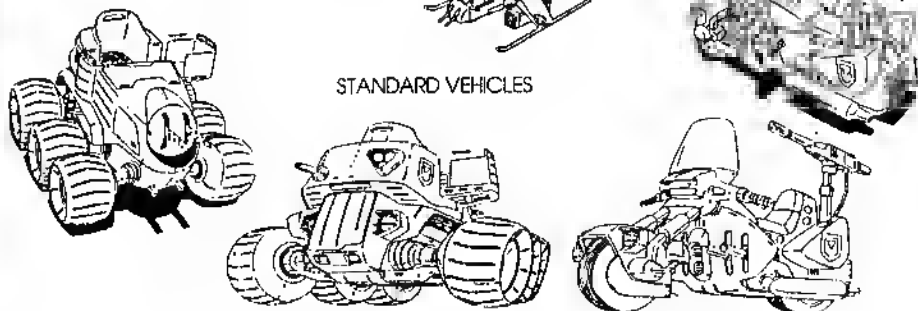
MEDICAL ROOM



CHAPEL



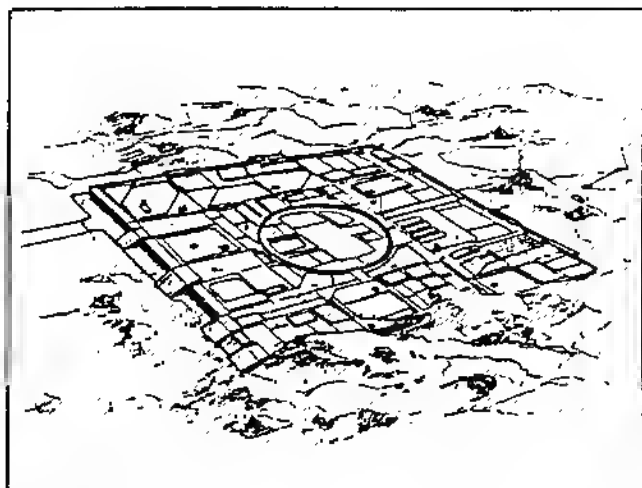
STANDARD VEHICLES



POLICE TOWER
(SUBTERRANEAN SECTION)

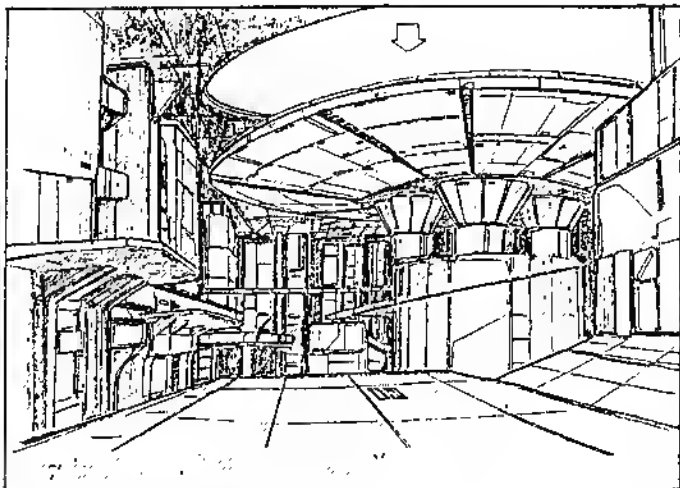
POLICE HELIPORT

Located a few miles outside the city, the heliport serves as a heavily-armed fortress that houses the elite members of the Police Force. Boro and Fantam Lady in particular have set up living quarters here to take advantage of the heavy protection. The heliport is accessible mainly by air, but unknown to almost everyone lies a dis-used underground monorail train that runs between it and the city and frequently provides Chirico's group with unhindered access.

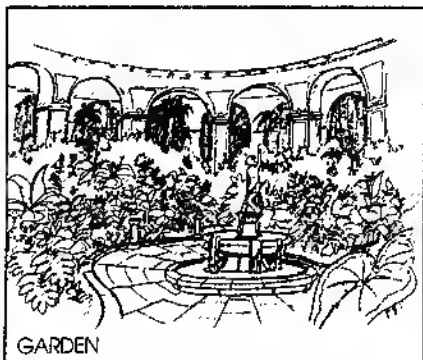


BIRD'S EYE VIEW

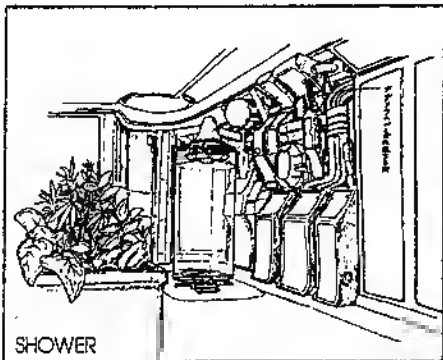
FANTAM LADY'S LIVING QUARTERS



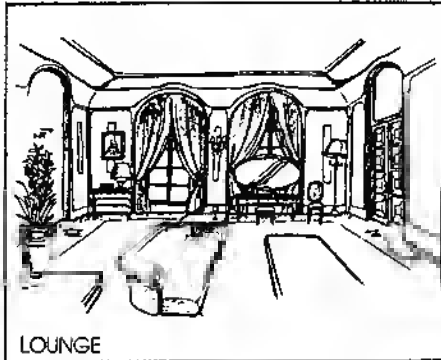
SUBTERRANEAN INTERIOR



GARDEN



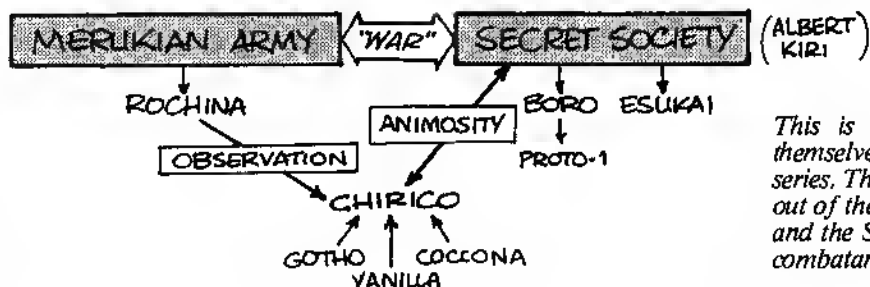
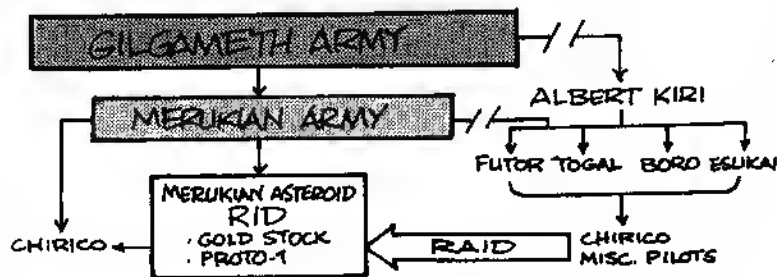
SHOWER



LOUNGE

ALIGNMENT CHARTS

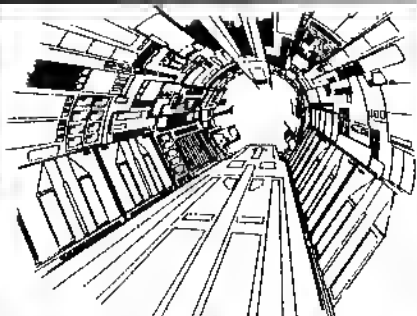
This chart depicts the political upheaval caused by Albert Kiri's engineering of OPERATION:RID. By detaching themselves of the Gilgameth army, they go on to form the Secret Society. Chirico, meanwhile, is cast out of the invasion force and is picked up by Jan Paul Rochina.



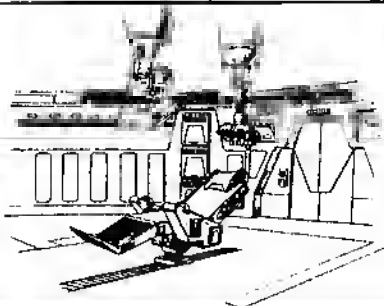
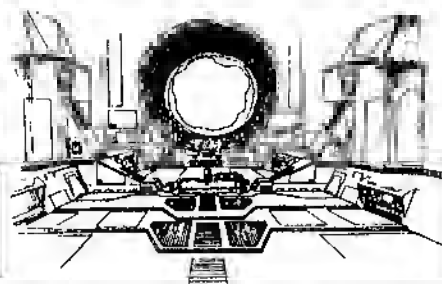
This is how the different factions align themselves for the majority of the Uodo series. The Gilgameth and Balalant armies are out of the picture for now, as the Merukians and the Secret Society become the two main combatants.

LOCALES

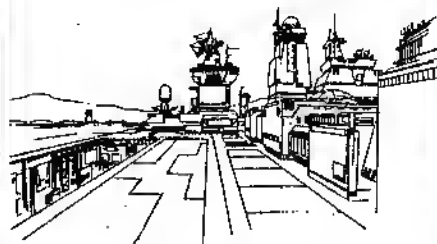
ASTEROID
RID-
ENTRY
PORT
(episode 1)



ASTEROID
RID-
CAPSULE
CHAMBER
(episode 1)

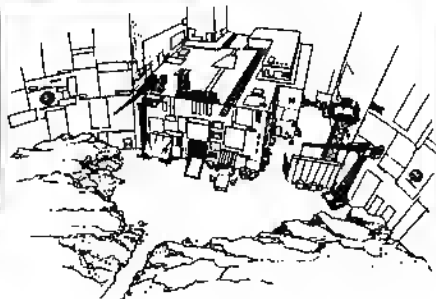


BAUNTONTO
INTERROGATION
ROOM
(episode 1)

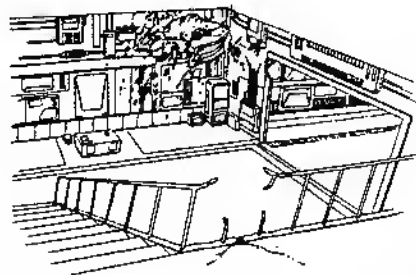
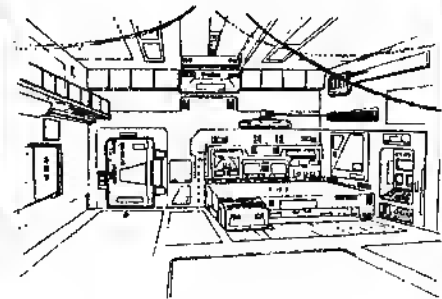


MERUKIAN
BASE
(episode 1)

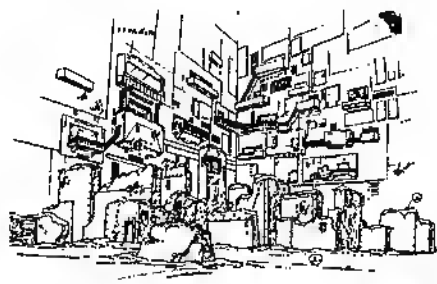
GOTHO'S
SCRAPYARD
(episodes 3-5)



GOTHO'S
OFFICE
(episodes 3-5)

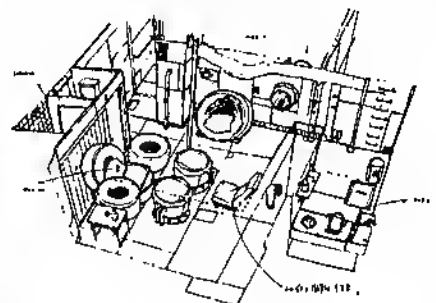


BATTLE
RING
RECEPTION
HALL
(episode 4)

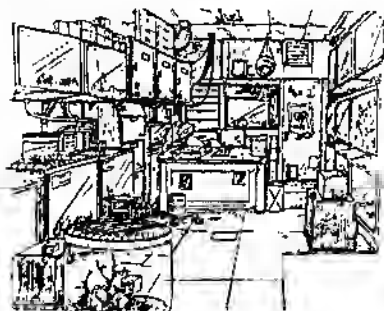
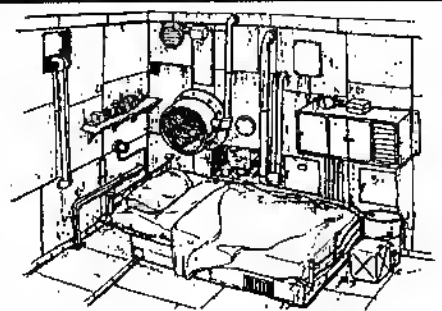


BATTLE
RING
ARENA
(episode 4)

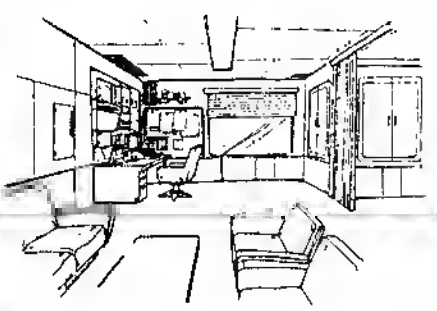
VANILLA'S
HOME
(episodes 6-10)



VANILLA'S
BEDROOM
(episodes 6-10)

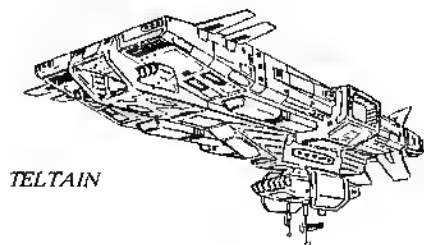


UOODO
PET
STORE
(episode 7)



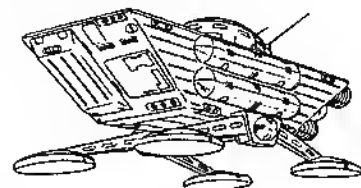
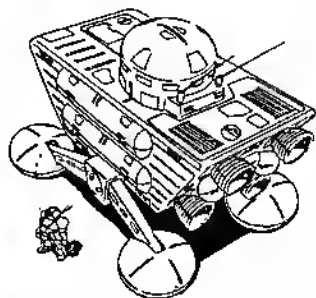
ROCHINA'S
INTELLIGENCE
OFFICE
(episodes 8-13)

EPISODE 1 AFTER THE WAR



TELTAIN

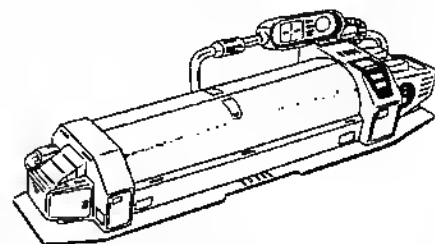
Somewhere in the war-torn Astraglus Galaxy, the retired Meruklan warship TELTAIN moves through deep space, approaching one of the Merukian Army's strategic asteroid bases: RID. The men on board follow the orders of their Gilgath commander, Albert Klir, who has a treacherous plot underway against his own army. By monitoring transmissions between RID and the nearby Meruklan battleship BAUNTONT, under command of Jan Paul Rochina, they quietly slip into RID's neighboring cluster and dispatch a bulky landing craft piloted by two battle-tested field commanders, Oriya and Konin. As they address their passengers—a complement of hardy Armored Trooper pilots—their collective gaze settles on one of them in particular: Chirico Cuvle.


A.T.
LANDING
CRAFT


The orders from the control room come down, and the landing craft moves into action, firing off missiles at RID's docking port, clearing out immediate resistance to move into a hasty landing. Once down, the A.T. pilots disembark and immediately engage in a bloody confrontation with the Scopedogs stationed to protect RID's valuable cargo. The invaders prove the superior warriors,

however, and when the defenders are effectively dealt with, they gather to organize their next move.

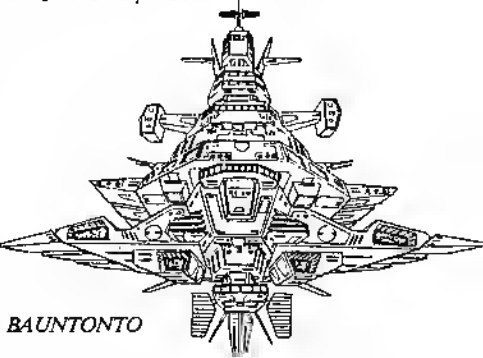
When Chirico protests their actions, he is reprimanded by his superiors and ordered to stay behind in his Scopedog while the others move on to retrieve their objective: a mountain of Meruklan Gold. Lurking in the shadows behind the exiled A.T. pilot, however, is a straggler of the earlier skirmish, armed with a huge gatling gun. Its blast punches a hole in the wall next to Chirico, who manages to evade the devastating shot and destroy his attacker. As he turns, he sees that the gun has blown a gaping hole completely through the next two chambers, straight out into open space. But it is an object in the first chamber that captures his attention next: an oblong cylindrical capsule suspiciously placed in the center of the room.



Curlously, Chirico steps out of his Scopedog and approaches the capsule, examining its gleaming indicators and realizing something is alive inside. He opens the capsule to see probably the most unexpected and important object in his life—the nude body of a strikingly beautiful woman, suspended in a pulsing energy field. Abruptly, she opens her eyes and stares straight into his. He responds the only way he knows how—drawing a blaster and pointing it at her. But her eyes have him transfixed...and rather than decimate those intriguing pools of brown, he leaps onto the switch, closing the capsule and removing the mind-wrenching vision.

As Chirico slumps onto the control panel, the other soldiers approach, finished with their gold theft, and question what he has discovered. Chirico climbs resignedly back into his A.T., but before he can make a move to prevent them from opening the capsule, he is ordered out into space to "spot" for incoming vessels. He moves slowly out through the tunnel, remembering the lady's

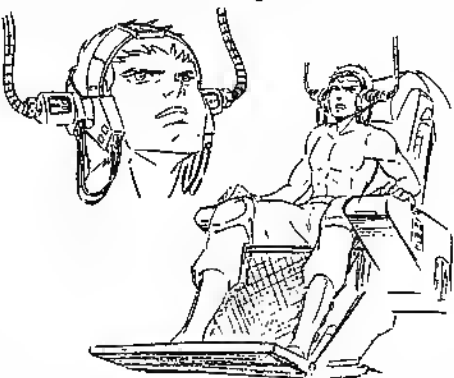
eyes...the eyes that seemed to bore through him, right to the center of his soul. "They must know what she is," he thinks, "she—"he turns. And hurtling directly toward him is a bomb, clearly intended for his destruction, and too fast to avoid. The resultant explosion hurls him away, disabling his A.T. and sending him on a one-way voyage into the icy void.



BAUNTONT

Sometime later, a voice crackles over the radio of the comatose pilot; a voice from BAUNTONT, which then moves to pluck the unresponsive Scopedog from its inexorable death-flight as Chirico sees subconscious images of endless warfare.

Abruptly shocked back to reality, Chirico is seated in a torture device being questioned by a tall figure braced in shadow: Jan Paul Rochina. He learns of Chirico's origins, but his questions about RID and its "possessions" are met with ignorance.



Later, BAUNTONT moves into a quiet landing on the planet Merukia, which is surrounded by floating junk, and Chirico is taken to a slightly more sophisticated torture device as Rochina and his Gilgath superior, Battentaln, look on. Chirico remains defiant and receives a particularly brutal shock which knocks him off the table and into a heap on the floor. He opens his eyes, and through a sea of pain, spots a bolt on the floor nearby. He manages to grab it just as

his captors approach and remove him to a cell, threatening that they will get their answers, regardless of the cost.

As the guards leave, however, he joins the cell door open with the bolt and makes a desperate break for freedom. Hearing of this incident, Rochino dispatches his men all over the base to recapture the rogue soldier, but Chirico skillfully battles his way to an airplane and away from the Meruklans. As Battentain orders a humiliated Rochino to begin tracking the renegade from the orbiting satellite stations, visions of the lady with brown eyes race through Chirico's head. She is at the center of his questions—and he will not rest until he has his answers.

At this point, Battentain probably looks upon Chirico as a stray member of the Secret Society who still remains loyal to his treacherous masters and wishes to return to them for his share of the RID spoils. No one realizes until much later Chirico's true intentions of seeking them out for revenge.

What also becomes apparent at this point is that a homing beacon has been implanted in Chirico's shoulder.

NOTE: six months pass in the space between these episodes, in which the armistice between the two armies is signed, officially ending hostilities. Recovery now begins.

EPISODE 2 VOODO

In the debris-filled space around the barren world to which Chirico has been brought, a Meruklan spotter satellite drifts, annihilating flotsam, tracking the runaway soldier, and beaming the signal to Battentain's base on the surface below. Chirico has entered Voodoo.

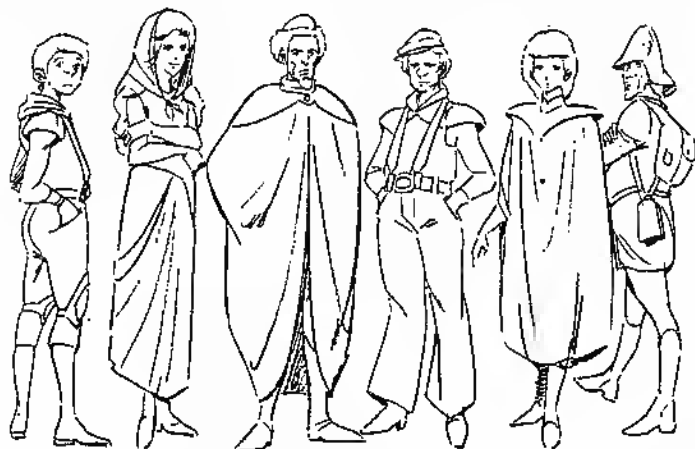
No punches are pulled in the establishing shots of Voodoo. The streets and alleys are crowded, damp, dirty, and reeking of depravation. As a result, we feel almost removed from our natural element as Chirico, who has quite possibly never seen a city from this viewpoint.

The streets are full of degradation, but Chirico walks through all of it with his head full of questions. His confused thoughts are suddenly broken by the sound of approaching motorcycles...and as street denizens break

into panic, members of the marauding Boone Gang explode into the city, destroying property, blasting sirens, and assaulting citizens. Almost before Chirico can react, he is snatched by a whip, slugged in the jaw, and unceremoniously dumped into a truck with other hapless victims. The signal is given and the bikers move out, human cargo in tow. Straggling street people cower in the shadows as vehicles of the Voodoo Police Force arrive on the scene, far too late to be of help. Silence settles on the streets once again.

support the war effort. Their discussion is interrupted by gunfire and shouts to get back to work just as imposing grey clouds move in and toxic rain cascades down upon them. They are forced to continue working, however, and when Rappe's gas mask malfunctions, Chirico's attempt to help him only provokes a cruel beating from the guards. Needless to say, the situation could be better.

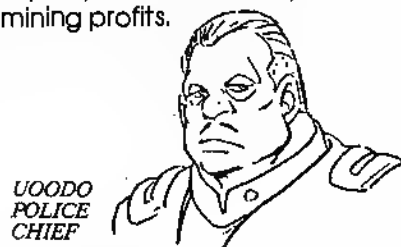
Later that evening, Rappe and Chirico observe a police caravan approach and stop outside the Boone fortress. Out steps the Chief of



VOODO
STREET
PEOPLE

In the rugged outback surrounding the city, the Boone caravan arrives at its destination—a broken down structure serving as the Boone palace of authority. The unfortunate captives are forced to don heavy cloaks and are given jackhammers to dig into the surrounding foothills under armed supervision. Chirico meets Rappe, a grizzled captive brought here in an earlier city-raid. Rappe tells him of their purpose—to mine Jijirum, the valuable crystal used in computer components that

Police, who, according to Rappe, allows the Boone Gang to invade the nearby city in return for a piece of the mining profits.



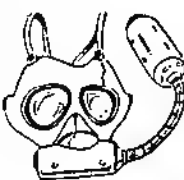
VOODO
POLICE
CHIEF

The chief has other plans, however, which become apparent when he enters a party held by Boone himself, but refuses hospitality and announces that because of changing times, he has come to shut down the operation. Boone is quick to offer up a generous bribe, but before the chief can respond, an alert comes from outside—the prisoners are rebelling!

Several of them, including Chirico, attack the bikers standing guard outside, but before Chirico can mount up to ride away, he spots Rappe leading a charge into the house. Chirico runs into the dwelling after him, but arrives in the party chamber well after the gunfire has ceased. Boone is not present, but



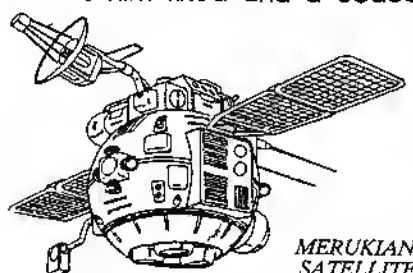
RAPPE



everyone else lies dead, including the police chief, whose treasure now lies forever beyond his reach. A fatally wounded Rappe emerges and grabs for a handful of Jilrium, but expires just as he has finally found his fortune.

Before Chirico can remove him, a garrison of bikers enters the room and opens fire. Chirico crashes through a nearby window and roars away on a motorcycle, his attackers in hot pursuit.

The roar of engines echoes off dingy buildings as they re-enter the city. By the time Chirico's pursuit force has narrowed to a single biker, he is on foot...but the Meruklan satellite has him fixed and a coded



MERUKIAN SATELLITE

message is brought to Rochina: RESCUE VALUE C. Orders are relayed, and just as things look hopeless for Chirico, his pursuer is dispatched by a clean gunshot erupting from nowhere.

Presumably, Rochina does not yet realize who the tracking satellite has spotted, and acts on its recommendation without speculation.

The rescue values are an intriguing point. 'A' would refer to an individual or machine who must be rescued at all cost, 'B' someone who it would be difficult (but not impossible) to function without, and 'C' an individual who should be rescued only if such a feat can be managed without losses.

Before Chirico can react, the sound of more approaching bikers forces him to his feet--and down a nearby waste chute into a vast junkyard buried deep within Uoodo. Climbing into the rusted hulk of an Armored Trooper, he closes the hatch over himself, falling into a much-needed sleep. Numerous parties pursue him and questions still plague his mind, but for now he has peace.

EPISODE 3 ENCOUNTER

As dawn breaks over Uoodo's outskirts, Boone issues commands to his remaining biker hordes.

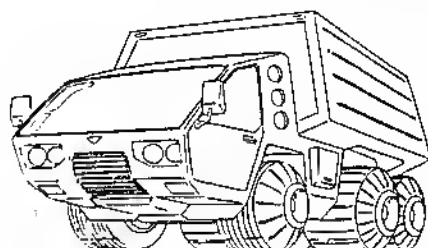
"A man from our prison has escaped into the city! He must be found and made to pay!"

Of course, the man he refers to is Chirico, who is just waking up in the A.T. carcass when a noise jolts him back to attention--a noise made by a plump old man smoking a pipe: Gotho. Following Gotho back to his nearby hovel, Chirico then meets an Inquisitive Coonna, who makes several rude (but good-natured) comments and leaves the two to get acquainted. Gotho serves up a welcome breakfast and points to a quartet of broken down A.T.'s slumped nearby. He is attempting to salvage them with parts in his junkyard, but is having little luck getting them operational again. Chirico's field instincts are ignited instantly, and he offers to examine them.



Elsewhere, a caravan of police vehicles pulls up outside the headquarters tower...and out form a sleek limo steps none other than Esukai, who is assuming the position left vacant by the deceased police chief while concealing his connections with the Secret Society. As Esukai disbands the previous chief's senior officers, he reveals a plan to allow the bikers to enter the city so the police can end their activities forever.

Back at Gotho's junkyard, Chirico has begun repairing a rusted out Scopedog when a truck pulls up. Out steps Vanilla Varla, who mentions the biker activity outside and proceeds to purchase a rifle from Gotho. Noticing Chirico, he sidles over while Gotho is occupied. He at-

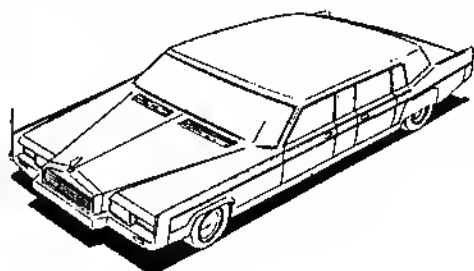


tempts to question the renegade about his dealings with the scrap dealer, but Chirico continues working and ignores the intruder.

As Coonna has a brief encounter with a horde of Boone bikers who ask her questions about their objective, the Scopedog begins to come together. Even when Vanilla overloads a part and it blows, Chirico knows instantly what to do. Meanwhile, Esukai's officers monitor biker activity, watching for travelling patterns in order to pinpoint a likely attack point.

Presently, a half dozen bikers meet in a crosswalk to share information as Coonna listens discreetly from an overhead hideaway. Overhearing their eventual rendezvous point, she heads back to Gotho with the news. After hearing of this, the three Uoodoans watch as Chirico mounts up the now-completed Scopedog. As the engines rev up, Gotho and Vanilla take bets on whether or not it will work. Chirico suits up in the pilot's seat and gives Coonna a cold glance--something different has come over him, and it is an attitude not lost upon her. Chirico is almost completely at ease as his robot rises slowly to a standing position. He is once again an operational soldier.

The Boone bikers close in on their destination while Esukai reaches his decision to attack. But as they draw together, another has decided to take part: Chirico! Before the bikers know what is happening, the Scopedog appears in their path and instantly begins blasting away. And as Chirico regains his military bearing by trouncing the scum that captured and beat him, another vehicle passes close by--a long, sleek auto



containing a rather important female passenger who he has seen before and will soon see again.

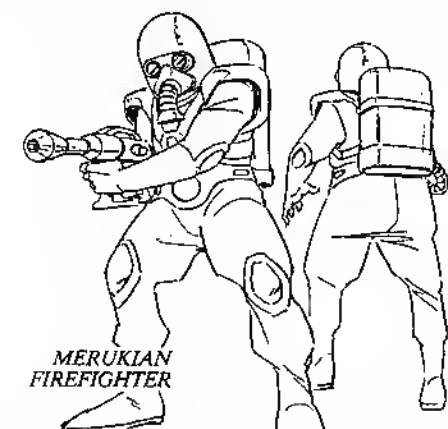
Just as Chirico's battle seems finished, Boone pulls up with his heavy artillery vehicles. As he prepares to give the fire command, a thunderous noise erupts all around them--the police trap has been sprung!

Boone's men now run for their miserable lives as the bombardment begins, but Chirico is paralyzed. Police explosives detonate all around him, threatening to consume the lone Scopedog in fiery hunger...but Chirico is frozen in battle-trance as death closes in.

EPISODE 4 BATTLE RING

As the fires rage and the police mop up the remaining Boone bikers, the Merukian Satellite last seen in episode 2 scrutinizes the situation and transmits its decision: RESCUE VALUE B!

Chirico is still experiencing battle flashbacks that paralyze him, but white-clad Merukian firefighters emerge quickly from the shadows, douse the flames, then disappear just as Gotho arrives. He glances around, puzzled at the sudden disappearance of the deadly fire.



MERUKIAN
FIREFIGHTER

Shortly thereafter, he dresses Chirico's wounds despite Coconna's continuous interruptions, and jabs Boone on with a new deal in mind.

"You were magnificent--almost as good as a Red Shoulder!"

Gotho then tells him about Battle Ring, one of Voodoo's most popular pastimes. In which A.T. pilots fight each other in a sophisticated wrestling match as spectators enjoy the

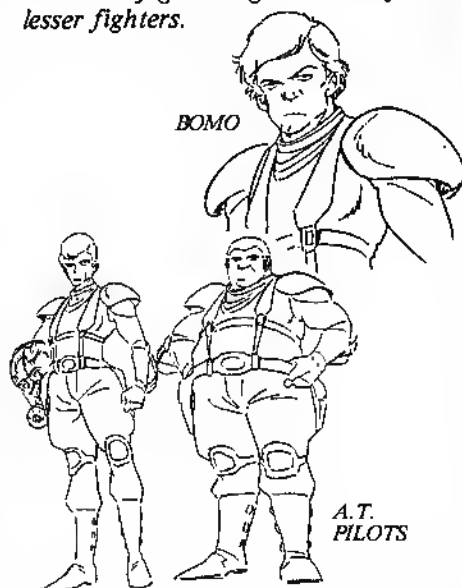
show. Seeing some real potential in Chirico, Gotho produces a contract to get the young soldier in on the game...a contract which Chirico signs despite Coconna's warnings.

Later, Gotho and his new partner arrive at the arena, just in time to see a familiar car pull up and a female passenger who looks hauntingly familiar.

"That's Fantam Lady," Gotho explains, "she comes to these matches often...some say she is looking for a special pilot. No one knows who or why."

Observing the brutal end to the current match, Chirico and Gotho make their way toward the locker rooms. On the way, they bump into Vanilla, who takes a moment off from his bookie activities to try and muscle in on Gotho's action. He is brushed off as the two continue through the A.T. warehouse and into the crowded locker room, where Gotho introduces his new contender.

As Chirico watches the smug contenders bask in their tiny victories, he takes on very distasteful tones...almost as if they are trivializing something he holds dear. He is first and foremost a soldier, and is less than pleased with the money-grubbing actions of these lesser fighters.



BOMO

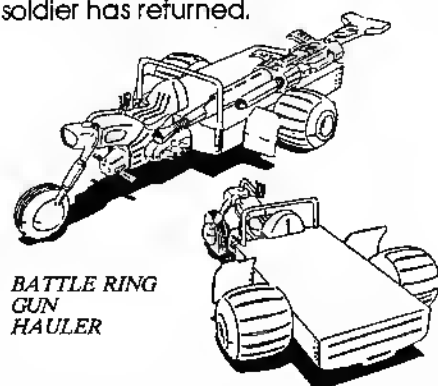
A.T.
PILOTS

The other pilots are unimpressed, and it is not long before Chirico begins trading some hot words with an egotistical hotshot named Bomo, who eagerly consents to fight him in the next round. Gotho smiles; everything is going well. But as he and Chirico leave to choose their

A.T., someone else spots them--none other than Konin, the traitorous field commander who was ordered to murder Chirico in RIDI. Konin enters the locker room, asking about Gotho's new contender. When Bomo smugly announces the arrangement, Konin demands to fight in his place. Respectful of the field commander's reputation, Bomo backs down, dumbfounded at his insistence.

Konin then puts in a quick call to Esukai at police headquarters, who has now been joined by Boro and Field Commander Orlya. Esukai is distressed by the news, but is reassured that Konin will finish the job.

As another Battle Ring match plays itself out, Chirico and Konin ready themselves in wings on either side of the battlefield. Finally, the NEXT GAME sign flashes up: CHIRICO VS. KONIN: REAL BATTLE. Gotho is alarmed, as this is a slightly more advanced program than he was anticipating, but Chirico steps calmly forward in his Scopedog. The grim soldier has returned.



BATTLE RING
GUN
HAULER

The spectators' battle fever runs high in the stands, as Vanilla rolls in bets even from Coconna. The two A.T.s stop in the center of the arena, pick up their weapons, then fall back as the ground trembles...and spews up dozens of monolithic slabs of rock that form a treacherous maze. REAL BATTLE indeed!

A whistle sounds and dead silence falls as the opponents enter the maze from opposite sides...but one gunblast is all it takes to whip up a frenzy again as Battle Ring begins in earnest. A tense cat-and-mouse game ensues as the two soldiers assault one another among the stone monoliths. And it soon becomes apparent to even the placid Fantam Lady that this is no ordinary match.

Then the truth hits Chirico--through an unexplained twist, he suddenly realizes this is not Boro, but someone he has known before. But before he can react, the other pilot attacks and pins him at gunpoint. It is then that the enemy shows his true colors.

"I failed to kill you once, Chirico--but now there will be no failure!"

"Commander Konini!"

Acting almost without conscious thought, Chirico lets fly with an armored punch at the enemy's head--demolishing him instantly and winning the match to the crowd's delight. Gotho, Vanilla, and Coonna are the first out on the field with new partnership offers, but Chirico is again in a state of shock: seeing and killing his commander have made the flashbacks return.

Then a new sound descends from overhead: police helicopters sent to arrest Chirico. Fantam Lady stands and leaves. And as his new partner is hauled away, Gotho calls after him.

"Don't worry, Chirico! You're my champion...I'll get you out somehow!"

EPISODE 5 THE TRAP

Holy light revolves over the inert body of Chirico Cuvie as he slowly stirs and hears a strong, condemning voice. The voice of God? No--the voice of Boro, gloating over his success in recapturing the escapee from OPERATION: RID. Esukai then hauls Chirico away for a beating and dumps him into a cell. Later, he pounds down alcohol in his office as Boro and Oriya reassure him they are no longer in any danger.

During Chirico's 'purification' scenes, Esukai looks rather nervously upon what he does...and when he hits the bottle afterward, one gets the distinct impression that he is not an entirely stable man. In upcoming episodes, he maintains this attitude, always very insecure when things get out of hand.

Esukai is disturbed that God's name had no effect on their prisoner. "Then he's like you," Boro comments.

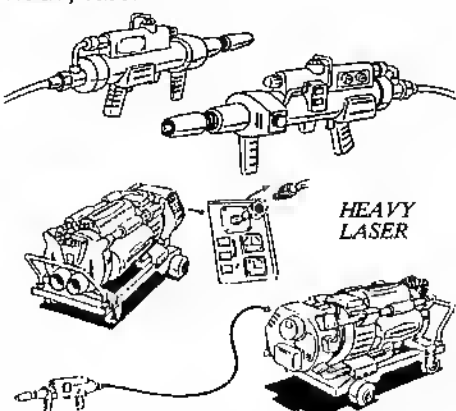
But just outside, the seeds of new danger are planted as Vanilla Vartia snaps off pictures of the police head-

quarters tower. He is interrupted by Coonna, who taunts him by correctly guessing his intentions to spring Chirico. He yells at her and lies his way out of it, then makes his way to a sleazy bar in the depths of the city.

All conversation drops as a massive policeman enters the bar, heads straight for Vanilla, and drags him into the bathroom. Sounds of a vicious beating issue from behind the closed door and the patrons turn away...but the sounds are being faked to cover for a sly deal on Vanilla's part to bribe the officer for a blueprint of the headquarters tower. Completing the deal, the cop leaves while Vanilla fakes pain to carry out the illusion.

In walks Coonna, who shocks Vanilla by bringing Gotho and telling him about her earlier guess. Adjourning to a back room, Gotho suggests a partnership to free Chirico, but Vanilla turns him down, wanting all the spoils for himself afterward. Gotho then offers to supply a heavy laser from his scrapyard, and Vanilla consents, realizing how well it will fit into his plans. As he produces the blueprint for Gotho's scrutiny, he hears a sound from the other side of the door, whips it open, and drags in Coonna, who has overheard everything and politely allies herself with the two conspirators.

As Chirico rests in his cell, the rescue attempt begins. Starting in the sewers, Gotho and his cohorts move slowly toward their objective, slicing holes neatly through interfering walls with the heavy laser.

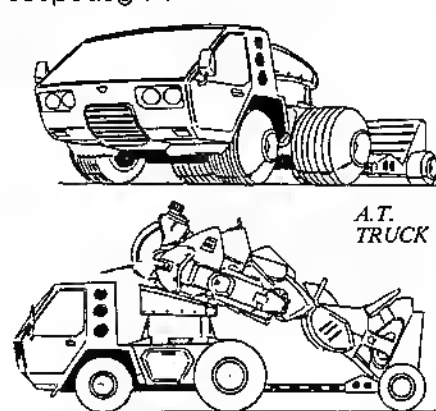


Above, Esukai orders Chirico brought to him for the final time. Three policemen retrieve him from the cell, but just as they exit, the floor falls out from under them. The rescuers have arrived! Knocking out the remaining guards, they pull Chirico away, leaving on explosion in his place.

Sirens wail and Esukai orders immediate mobilization. Police vehicles scour the area, but find nothing. The rogue soldier has escaped again! Shortly afterward, however, a call comes in to Esukai's office as he confers with Boro and Oriya--his sources have uncovered Chirico's location at Gotho's junkyard.

As Coonna patches up Chirico, Vanilla argues with Gotho over the spoils. Just then, the phone rings and Gotho answers. The adversaries have called with a proposal: Chirico is to meet them at a specified location for another session of Real Battle--this time for his life. At first, Gotho feigns ignorance, but Chirico grabs the phone and agrees to their terms. He wants answers, and he plans to get them his own way.

Night falls at the rendezvous point. Esukai and Boro watch from an overhead balcony as Oriya and his cohorts hide in the shadows in Scopedogs armed with heavy missile launchers. This time, they take no chances. A pair of headlights break the night as an A.T. trailer-truck approaches--their opponent! In a flash, they erupt from the darkness and blow it away...but there is no one inside the Scopedog it carried.



Abruptly, Chirico explodes onto the scene in his trusty Scopedog. His trap has worked...and as the battle gets underway, interested parties gather: Gotho's group, Fantam Lady in her car...and a garrison of heavily-armed police.

Chirico again experiences a war flashback, but this time he does not freeze up, and manages to overcome Oriya with a series of tricky maneuvers. Holding him at gunpoint, Chirico demands answers about who wanted him killed and why. Just as Oriya begins to talk, Esukai (watching from a plat-

form with Boro) barks an order and the surrounding police cut loose a barrage that kills the former field commander and pins Chirico. Through the explosions and smoke, however, he spots Fantam Lady's car pull away. She has been watching him...but remains beyond his reach.

EPISODE 6 THE PROTOTYPE

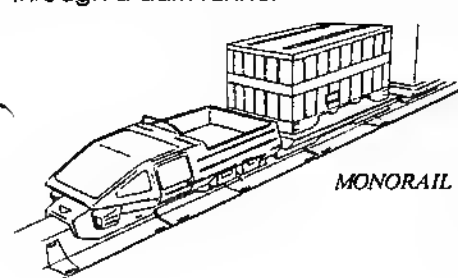
Chirico is snapped back to reality with a shout from Vanilla to escape the police onslaught. The A.T. pilot scrambles out of his Scopedog just before it is blown apart and joins Gotho's group on the run. Police chase them into the sewers but Vanilla brings their pursuit to a halt with a fast (and unsavory) cascade of sludge.

Later, the group relaxes in Vanilla's home (as Gotho's is now unsafe) and Chirico laments his situation, wishing he knew just why the hell everyone so insistently wants to kill him. Gotho and Vanilla suggest that he fight in Battle Ring to clear his head, but he stands and walks out, saying his mind is too full of questions.

As Chirico rests, he remembers all the events from OPERATION:RID, especially the mystery lady, and is compelled to take action.

Later, while Boro and Esukai discuss their situation in the police chief's office, Coonna shouts to Gotho and Vanilla, "Chirico's gone!" Somewhere outside, Chirico K.O.'s a cop, steals his bike and uniform, and heads for the headquarters tower.

Gotho and Vanilla talk about what they can do to aid Chirico in his dilemma, since the sooner he gets back on his feet, the sooner he can return to the arena and earn them some freedom. Deciding to visit the information center in the police heliport outside the city, they make their way to an abandoned monorail train far underground and shuttle off through a dark tunnel.



The abandoned monorail quietly epitomizes one of Uoodo's most basic attitudes: apathy. Vehicles are used and discarded, forgotten and replaced. Gotho and his companions' goal sets them apart and earns them a little more respect from the audience, in that they choose not to discard Chirico in the same fashion.

Sneaking into the headquarters tower through the laser holes made by his rescuers, Chirico forces his way straight into Esukai's office. Esukai doesn't think much of the hooded figure until it pulls a gun on him and removes its helmet--Chirico has returned! The harassed soldier then gets rough with his former C.O., demanding answers to all the OPERATION:RID mysteries, especially the lady. Esukai consents to take Chirico to her in the police heliport, the same base to which Gotho's group now travels.

Esukai pilots a helicopter to the base under Chirico's armed supervision--and secretly activates a switch that puts the base on alert just as Gotho's group has snuck inside. Noticing all the police activity, they realize it will be difficult to reach the information center, so they incapacitate three officers and steal their uniforms.

Nearby, Esukai lands the helicopter and distracts Chirico for just the split second he needs to jump for cover. Concealed police instantly open fire on the intruder, who has to once again run for his life. Reaching the infestation, Gotho's group notices his predicament on a video monitor and shout a rendezvous idea to him over the P.A. This is also heard by Esukai, who orders his men after the fleeing soldier.

Chirico manages to evade his pursuers, however, and after rejoining his companions, ducks down a subhallway and through a large, antique wooden door. Behind it is a very unexpected sight--a posh apartment filled with vegetation and a quaint fountain. A few moments later, they encounter the apartment's inhabitant--Fantam Lady! Hiding amid some shrubbery, they watch her shower (thoroughly scolded by Coonna) and then notice something unusual about the facility she uses...Instead of water, she bathes in a kind of luminous

energy. Moving through overhead pipes are Jijilum crystals that apparently supply the energy!

She steps out of the shower and dons a robe, walking into the next room to brush her hair. Enough is enough for Chirico, though, who boldly strides in behind her, much to his companions' chagrin.

For a long, tense moment, Chirico and Fantam Lady stare at each other, and he no longer doubts that hers are the same pools of brown that touched his soul on RID. He begins to speak, but she bolts from the room to escape him.

Chirico and the others chase after her, but instead find more police who want only to empty their weapons on them. As Chirico lays down cover, the others run to a helicopter and rev it up for a quick escape.

Lifting off without him, Vanilla fires the flying machine's missiles at Chirico's antagonists and drops a rope ladder to carry him on a shaky ride to freedom. Vanilla skillfully slips the helicopter out of the police net and heads back to Uoodo across the dusky sky. Chirico is again free...but the mysteries still imprison him.

EPISODE 7 THE RAID

Police helicopters angrily comb the city for any trace of the chopper Chirico and his companions made off with last episode. Firing on a section of the city roof and seeing no sign of resistance, they move on--watched the entire time by Vanilla, whose home is indeed nestled within an edge of the roof. He returns to his friends inside, who complain about the lack of food and an obstinate Chirico, who refuses to go out and fight for money. Disgusted, he leaves for a walk in the city. Outside, he sees a female mannequin lying on the ground--a mannequin with deep brown eyes.

An interesting parallel exists between Chirico and Fantam Lady at this point...the eyes. Fantam Lady's eyes made an intense impression on him, and Chirico's eyes were the only unblocked portion of his body that were visible to her. Thus, the eyes remain the clearest image each of them retains of the other.

Each time they meet in the Uoodo series (and several times thereafter) the imagery heavily emphasizes eye contact, constantly alluding back to the significance of their first meeting.

The owner of the real brown eyes, meanwhile, plays the organ in Boro's chapel as he confers with Esukai on the continued dilemma caused by Chirico's presence. But a more important subject at the moment is an outgoing shipment of Jijirium to be flown to Albert Kiri.

Stopping for a meal at an Uoodo sushi bar, Chirico hears of the shipment as well, and sees an opportunity to strike back at his oppressors. Coconna has followed him here, and tries to catch up with him when he leaves, but is stopped by a member of the now-scattered Boone gang with a few lascivious ideas. By the time she has sweet-faced her way out of this predicament, however, Chirico is gone.



Entering a sleazy pet store, Chirico makes a purchase and wanders outside to find a cop. Coconna spots him again, but ducks into an alley when he finds a policeman and calmly offers up a bribe for some information. The officer comes on strong, and Chirico hands him the bag. Expecting a wad of cash, the cop instead gets a faceful of one very mean animal!



As the lawman writhes on the ground with the beast on his face, Chirico demands information on the Jijirium shipment. Satisfied with the cop's answers, he moves on. But

before Coconna can follow, the Boone goon reappears with some friends and rides off with her firmly clutched under one arm.

Chirico returns to Vanilla's home as he and Gotho refit their stolen helicopter with a pair of nasty quad guns. Asking about Coconna, he becomes concerned when she has not returned. Instead, she has been hauled back to the Boone fortress in the outback. Surrounded by biker goons who demand information, she is in a dangerous predicament.

Far away, in the Merukian Army base Chirico escaped from in episode 1, Jan Paul Rochina is given new orders by Battentain. By monitoring Chirico, they have gotten a lead on the lost subject of their top secret Perfect Soldier Project--and the time has come to retrieve it. Rochina boards a helicopter and takes off, Uoodo-bound.

As Chirico, Vanilla, and Gotho make ready for a decisive move, Coconna returns to the shack--bruised and frazzled. Through tears and fits of crying, she tells the others she overheard Chirico's talk with the policemen and subsequently told the Boone bikers everything. Vanilla and Gotho scold her up and down, then confer with Chirico about how to proceed. The Boones will now obviously want revenge on the police for shutting down their operation, and theft of a Jijirium shipment would be a crippling blow. This presents an intriguing opportunity for them--if they can steal it first.

Later, Boro, Esukai and Fantam Lady watch the movement of their valuable shipment from the airport section of the police headquarters tower. A police helicopter soars overhead and is abruptly blown apart--the Boones have begun their attack! As the police hit back, the airport is thrown into turmoil and no one notices the two stray vehicles approach from behind the tower--a refitted helicopter and an A.T. truck carrying a Scopedog.

Gotho and Vanilla lay down covering fire from the helicopter and spot a certain truck below heading for a waiting cargo plane: the Jijirium shipment! Relaying their observation to Coconna in the A.T. truck, she tells Chirico to power up--their objective is in sight.

Chirico leaps off the vehicle in his Scopedog, blowing away Boones and police collectively to reach the Jijirium truck. Stopping it, he forces the driver out and provides covering fire for Coconna to replace the cop in its cab.



Rochina's Merukian helicopter soars far overhead, but there is nothing that can be done to halt the conflict below.

So buried in chaos is the airfield, that Chirico's group is easily able to pull away with the valuable mineral shipment. All the commanding officers in the tower can do is watch them disappear back into the nearby city...and realize Chirico has become a force to reckon with.

EPISODE 8 THE DEAL

At Vanilla's home in the roof of Uoodo, the stolen Jijirium is unceremoniously dumped into a huge pile--into which jump an ecstatic Vanilla and Coconna. Gotho watches like a proud father as the two list off the silly things they now intend to buy...but Chirico quietly repairs his Scopedog, ignoring the useless banter. He expresses no interest in the money, and when Vanilla offers to claim Chirico's share, an argument ensues. Chirico is oblivious to it all, and simply walks away. Coconna tries to follow him, but Gotho holds her back...Chirico needs to be on his own to think things out.

Gotho shows a great range of character in this scene. The most mature of the three city people, he argues about his stake in the treasure one minute, then turns around and perceives Chirico's need for solitude. Coconna, on the other hand, is always anxious for romantic interludes, and does not understand the turmoil Chirico goes through with his deluge of

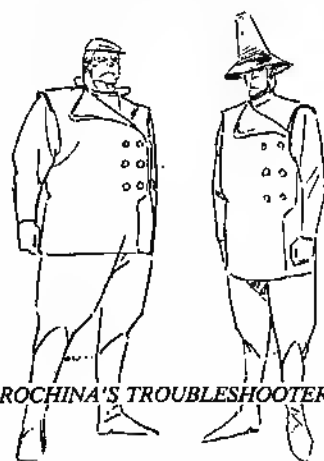
unsolved mysteries.

The wind swirls around him as he looks out over the grimy city and thinks of the growing mysteries in his life...and the brown-eyed lady.

That lady, meanwhile, arrives at the police headquarters tower as Boro and Esukai confer about Chirico and the stolen Jijirum. Boro smugly mentions a new plan...a new person they can use against their nemesis...one who cannot fail.

Throughout the Uoodo episodes, Fantam Lady spends a great deal of time in contemplation in Boro's chapel. One senses a great deal of oppression by the intensity of her prayer sessions. Out of this oppression grows an awakening when she eventually speaks to Chirico and finds his independent nature far more attractive.

Outside, police activity reaches a peak as the city is combed for the stolen Jijirum. Rochina watches from his hidden intelligence office and addresses his two assistants. He mentions their assignment as PROGRAM ONE: CHIRICO CUVIE and the pair of troubleshooters are dispatched to dig up all the information they can find on the rogue soldier.



ROCHINA'S TROUBLESHOOTERS

At Vanilla's home, Coonna returns with the alarming news of all the police activity. Gotho realizes their stolen treasure is now worse than worthless--if they try to use it, they will be caught instantly. Arguing with Vanilla, an outrageous idea comes to Gotho: why not go directly to police HQ and bargain for their freedom? Vanilla and Coonna balk at the idea, so Gotho volunteers to go it alone. They are convinced he will end up in prison, but Chirico speaks on his behalf. He believes the

plan will work.

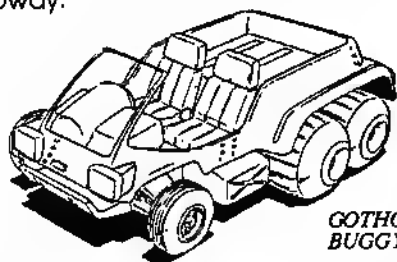
Boro further outlines his plans to Esukai in the police chief's office when a call comes in from none other than Albert Kiri. Esukai is given a round of threats about the stolen Jijirum, but Boro reassures him. What he has in mind will succeed in regaining everything they have lost.

As one of Rochina's troubleshooters returns with the first news of their objective, Gotho sits in a cramped interrogation room being threatened by a pair of nasty cops. When it becomes obvious he will not give them information on the Jijirum until he speaks to the police chief himself, Esukai and Boro enter. Satisfied with his audience, Gotho proposes a deal: the stolen jewels will be returned in exchange for a substantial sum of money and his group's amnesty. The deal is approved, a meeting place is chosen, and both sides part, Esukai whispering treacherous plans to Boro.

Gotho runs cheering back to his companions. It looks like the deal will work--but Chirico is suspicious. He is sure the police will stiff them on the arrangement, and outlines a plan to deal with them a bit more effectively.

A short time later, the arrangement begins when Coonna drives the truckful of Jijirum up to a pair of cops and runs off. They recognize it as their stolen property, but do not find any trace of the girl who left it. Phase One is successful.

At the decaying amphitheater agreed upon as the meeting place, Phase Two begins. Gotho drives up in a buggy alone, parks, and calls out. Just as it seems no one else has arrived, a trio of spotlights pinpoint him as Esukai's truck pulls up a few yards away.



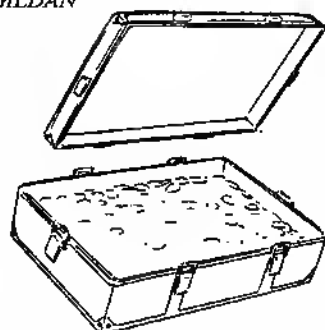
GOtho's BUGGY

Esukai and a gargantuan policeman step out with a case of gold coins and demand the return of their Jijirum. A phone in the cab of the police truck buzzes, and the

driver relays its message to Esukai that the stolen crystals have been recovered.



GILGATHEM MONEY--THE GILDAN



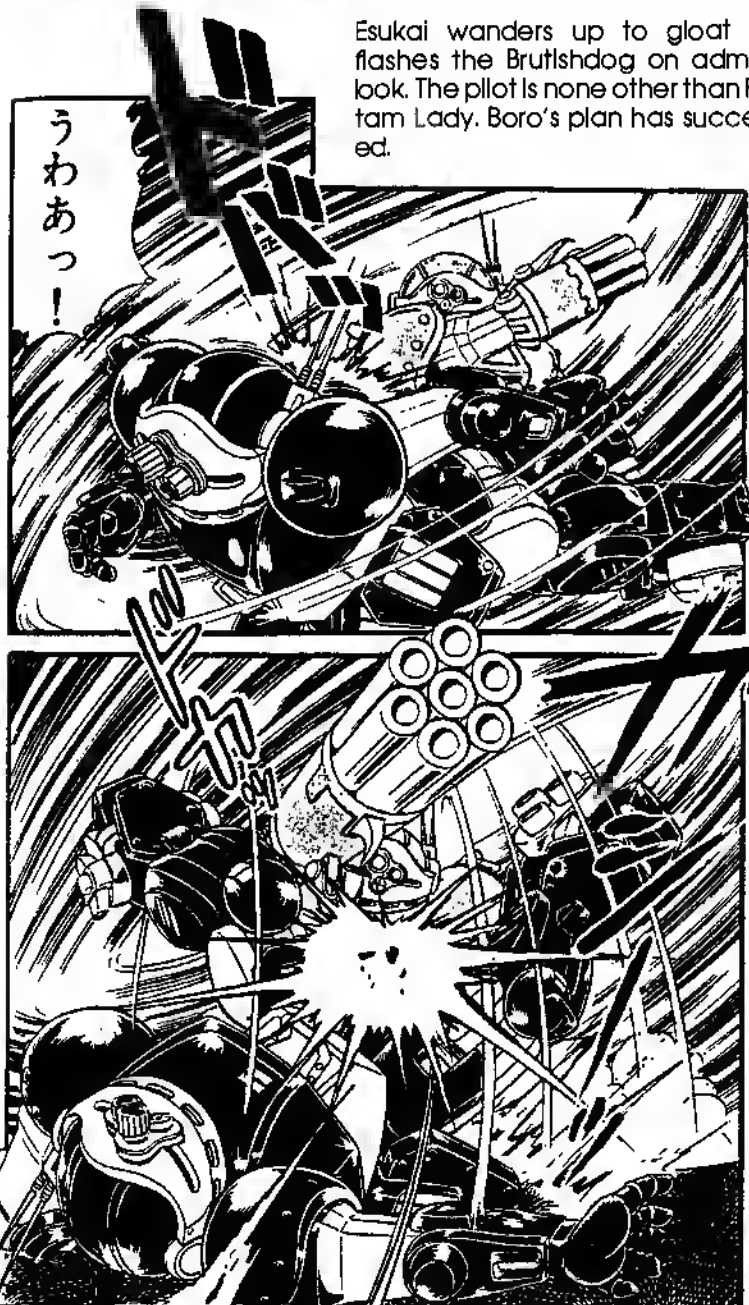
"Well enough," Esukai responds, "come and get your treasure." Gotho moves hungrily forward, but is instantly surrounded by armed police. Esukai has indeed welched on the deal. Irritated, Gotho produces a walkie-talkie and threatens to call in an imaginary strikeforce. Unimpressed, Esukai calls the bluff and orders him out of their sight. Riding out in the buggy, Gotho makes a real transmission--to Chirico and Vanilla, who have been waiting outside with the A.T. truck and the Scopedog.

They roar into the amphitheater, immediately laying into the cops and forcing Esukai to dive for cover. As Chirico blows away the police, Gotho and Vanilla scoop up the case of money and call to him to pull out. Chirico, however, has spotted Esukai and moves deliberately toward him--this time the false chief will not escape his wrath.

But the chief doesn't need to run...for out of a spotlight steps a new opponent: a red A.T. with a cannon built into one arm: Brutishdog! The battle begins again, and Gotho and Vanilla zoom away from the war zone, leaving Chirico to mop up. But this time, Chirico is outmatched--the other A.T. pilot toys with him, blowing bits of his A.T. away one by one until finally smashing his lenses off and sending his Scopedog crashing to the ground, battered and helpless. Chirico is astounded, and all he can do is gape at the opponent.

"Who are you," he blurts out, "how can you be such a skillful fighter?"

Esukai wanders up to gloat and flashes the Brutishdog on admiring look. The plot is none other than Fontam Lady. Boro's plan has succeeded.



CHIRICO
VS. THE
BRUTISHDOG

EPISODE 9 THE RESCUE

Esukai releases a tirade of gloats at the helpless Chirico as prison trucks pull in--the rogue soldier is once again his. Far up in the stands of the amphitheater, one of Rochinda's spies relays this information to his superior.

Far away now, Vanilla and Gotho ride away in triumph--the treasure is theirs! Returning to Vanilla's home, they pass the cheer on to Coonna, who praises Chirico up and down. She can't wait for his return.

But Chirico is not coming home tonight. Instead, he is tossed into a prison truck which becomes the

center of a caravan bound for police headquarters.

As the prison truck pulls away, Chirico berates his guards for following a police chief who bought his position with stolen money and lies. The guards put no stock in his opinions, however, mainly since they are quite probably just as corrupt as their commander and therefore wouldn't care about the moral implications.

Playing with their new treasure, Gotho's group becomes concerned with Chirico's continued absence. He has not found his way back yet, and Vanilla wonders if he ever made it out.

"He must have," Coonna pro-

tests, "he's too good--they'd never capture him!" But as the others begin to outweigh her argument, she is forced to realize they may be right. At that moment, a police helicopter flies over, spots the shack, and moves to land and inspect it. Entering Vanilla's home, the two policemen spot the case of money, but before they can appropriate it, Gotho and Vanilla knock them out.

Meanwhile, Esukai's caravan moves through the polluted streets and sends out a transmission to a patrol copter--the same one that has landed at the shack. Vanilla fakes his way through the radio call, learning that the vehicles are passing nearby with an important prisoner and require air escort.

"Chirico," shouts an excited Coonna, "they must have him!" The others are hesitant about interfering, but she lays a tremendous guilt trip on them. "After all he's done for you, you leave him to them? He's given you a fortune and this is how you repay him?" They finally admit she is right, and lift off in the helicopter to find their endangered benefactor.

Spotting the caravan, they land on a nearby rooftop, and Gotho and Coonna quietly swipe a truck and motorcycle from a seazy garage. Circling around to meet the police vehicles head on, Coonna leaps onto Gotho's cycle from the truck, sending it right into the lead vehicle. The other police machines halted, Vanilla soars over in the helicopter and blasts away. Police guards shoot back, giving Chirico an opportunity to make a break. But before he can get free, Esukai himself fires a flare at his prisoner, immobilizing him long enough to be recaptured.

As the caravan restarts, the would-be rescuers regroup on a rooftop. Gotho and Vanilla immediately resign themselves to forgetting about Chirico and leaving the city with their treasure.

"Treasure? That's it!" This from Coonna, who has come up with a brilliant, though costly, rescue idea that shocks the others. Once she demonstrates its potential effectiveness, however, they realize she's right again.

Coonna is finally given an opportunity to shine in this episode. Her crush on Chirico gives her considerable

arguing strength when the two other men are almost always ready to give up and run. Her idea about using the treasure in the second rescue attempt is a flash of unqualified brilliance, and she has no qualms about putting Chirico's safety above spoils of money.

This attitude is unique for someone who grew up in Uoodo, and sets her apart as a more worthwhile companion than the average street urchin.

The caravan has now reached a heavily-congested street and is slowed by a crowd of pedestrians. Vanilla and the others approach in their helicopter, which one of the cops recognizes and fires at. Puzzled, the crowd looks up...and Gotho lobs out coins from their case of money.

"That's not the way to do it," Coonna protests. "THIS is the way to do it!" With that, she picks up and practically dumps the entire case out the window.

The shower of gold plummets out of the copter and down into the crowd. All it takes is one shout, and the street people plunge into a frenzy, grabbing up the money from heaven and effectively clogging the police caravan's path. The vehicles draw to a halt and treasure-hunters swarm over them, grabbing all the gold they can find and even assaulting an occasional ill-mannered cop.

Helpless, Esukai and Fantam Lady watch as the helicopter descends and rescues their prisoner, carrying him back to freedom. All of this is relayed to Rochina, who continues to collate the incoming data on the increasingly mysterious events.

Later at Vanilla's shack, the triumphant quartet relaxes in renewed safety. True to character, the three rescuers each stashed a little treasure for themselves, and as they laugh at each other, Chirico watches...at peace for now.

During the closing dialogue, Chirico admits that his rescuers saved him, implying that he did not expect them to be capable (or willing) to do so.

This confession creates mutual respect on both sides; Chirico's personality does not lend itself well to thank-you's, so this disclosure of feelings, though subtle, means a great deal to Gotho and the others. Chirico, meanwhile, has begun to realize these

unruly non-soldiers can be helpful in their own rite.

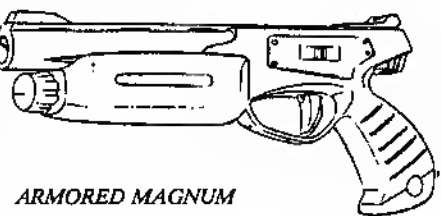
EPISODE 10 RED SHOULDER

Night In Uoodo--a gigantic caravan of police vehicles (Earth-movers and Flamethrowers) rumbles through the dark city. This is observed by Rochina's men, but their report is dismissed. Rochina realizes who their target must be, but he doesn't intend to waste lives on a rescue attempt. The Merukians will not interfere.

The vehicles go to work demolishing a quiet scrapyard section in the roof of the city--the same area in which Chirico's group currently resides. The noise wakes up the three Uoodoan opportunists, who venture outside Vanilla's shack to find Chirico already observing the approaching carnage. Chirico shouts a sudden alert--"CYLINDER" and an air-to-ground missile slams into the rock next to them. Abruptly, Chirico is all business, leading the group to the closest shelter available. But the situation has worsened--police helicopters swarm overhead, relaying video shots to headquarters, where Esukai, Boro, and Fantam Lady watch in anticipation.

Gotho, Vanilla, and Coonna slump to the ground as their hope gives out. As they begin to lament their lives coming to such an unprofitable end, Chirico snaps them back into reality. He has found a tiny passage to the city far below, leading to a hair-raising, but successful escape.

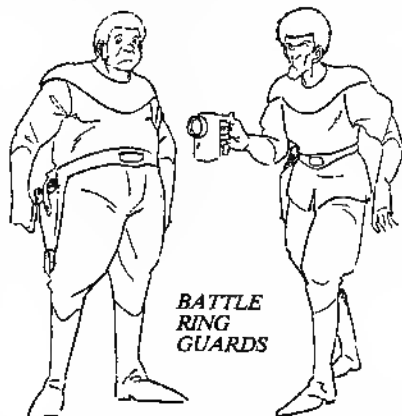
Later, the group has found a deserted food store to hide in, and as the three street people enjoy a victorious (though scroungey) meal, Chirico cleans his Armored Magnum, calmly tells them he now plans to go on the offensive, and walks away, letting them know he has valued their help in this whole adventure, but does not expect them to follow him any longer.



ARMORED MAGNUM

An encouraging report arrives at Esukai's desk--no sign of life has been found by the police wrecking crew. He and Boro laugh triumphantly, but Fantam Lady walks quietly away. Esukai suggests they dispose of their now-obsolete A.T. pilot, but Boro insists she remain with them. Esukai grumbles, but consents.

Disposing of a TV-watching "guard", Chirico sneaks into the A.T. warehouse of Battle Ring, intending to assemble his arsenal.

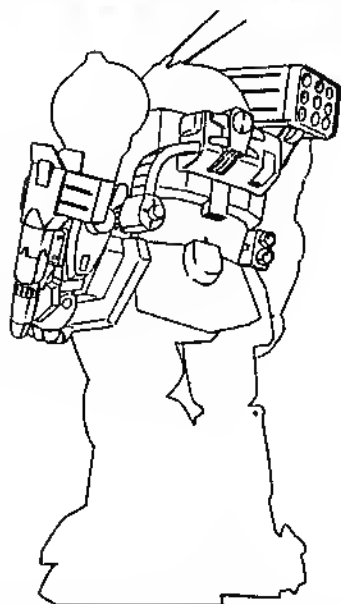


Once again, Uoodo attitudes are typified in this scene. The callous "guards" are unimpressed as the TV flashes through a blatant ad for a handgun. Violence is as accepted a social norm as apathy, and Uoodo certainly abounds with both.

In a subterranean sewer system, meanwhile, Gotho's group moves quietly away from trouble, but Coonna decides to turn back, arguing that they can't leave Chirico to face his enemies alone. Gotho and Vanilla simply stare after her as she runs off.

Back at Battle Ring, another "guard" returns to find his incapacitated friend, and discovers Chirico's presence. He manages to quickly phone the police and is assaulted by an angry Coonna. When her bumbling attack fails, he pins her down at gunpoint--and is swiftly konked by Vanilla and Gotho, who have once again decided to do the right thing. Coonna excitedly tells them she knows where Chirico is, and they soon discover his intentions in returning to this place.

Chirico is assembling his own Scopedog, heavily empowering it with missile launchers and cannons. The others pitch in to help him, and Vanilla slyly spray-paints the left shoulder pod a bright red.



"How's this, Chirico--now you're a Red Shoulder! That'll strike terror into their hearts!"

"Fine," Chirico deadpans, "but you painted the wrong shoulder."

It is then that Gotho realizes exactly the manner of fighter they have been dealing with.

"Chirico," he blurts out, "Y--you're a Red Shoulder, aren't you?"

Chirico is almost ashamed when he explains his involvement with Red Shoulder Battalion. Obviously, he retains enough of the memories to know of the unpleasant implications, and it is this episode in which his assimilation with those implications begins.

At the moment, he recognizes the effectiveness of Vanilla's idea, but the stakes will have to be very high before he assumes the rank of Red Shoulder again.

When Chirico nods, Vanilla roars with laughter. "I knew it! No wonder you--"THOOMMM!

An explosion rocks the warehouse as the group takes cover--the police have arrived.

EPISODE 11 COUNTERATTACK

As Fantam Lady plays in Boro's chapel, Boro and Esukai approach. They want her to come with them for an examination. She politely refuses, but is stopped by a cry from Boro.

"Proto-One," he shouts, "you will do as we say! Now come with us!"

This scene grows quickly to an important revelation. It is the first time Fantam Lady has openly defied her superiors, and it is this defiance that provokes Boro to call out the name "Proto-1." This name apparently has some type of hold over her, and literally freezes her in her tracks. The unsympathetic Boro must know of its effect on her, but has no regrets about using it at the slightest provocation.

As the police tanks trundle in on the Battle Ring warehouse, Chirico barks plans to his companions and nimbly shouts out the headlights. Darkness falls on the area. Policemen shout to Chirico to surrender, then kick on a full bank of floodlights. An A.T. emerges and a wave of shock ripples through the police force.

"Red Shoulder! It's a Red Shoulder!!" The Armored Trooper immediately moves into action, blasting away and zipping off as fast as its roller dash will take it. The remaining cops fire their cannons, blasting the fleeing machine apart. As they move cautiously toward the smoking wreck, it makes no move to stop them.

blasting the puzzled cops out of their false victory. They turn to face ANOTHER Red Shoulder A.T.--this time with Chirico inside it!

The battle begins in earnest, as Chirico wipes out every opponent in sight, zooming away and clearing a path for Gotho's group to follow in a stolen A.T. truck carrying still another Scopedog.

In police headquarters, Proto-1 is being hooked up to a mind-tapping device when the alert call comes through for Esukai...Chirico is free! But the business at hand is more important. The controller begins a memory search program to see exactly what is on their soldier's mind.

The first clear image that appears is Chirico in the police uniform he was wearing in episode 6 during their first meeting. This is unusual, but not unexpected. The next discovery is a psycho-imprinted code number: PSP-0001, which is the cause of some excited speculation.

But when the controller manages to dredge up Proto-1's very first memory, Esukai and Boro recoil in shock--the image is of Chirico in



But they are being watched by someone else. A gun barrel rises calmly into position and cuts loose.

episode 11 By correlating the date of that memory, they confirm that OPERATION:RID was indeed their first

meeting, and Chirico's image is permanently ingrained. Assuming she can no longer be trusted, Esukal draws his gun to kill Proto-1 on the table, but he is stopped by Boro. Using almost fatherly terms, he convinces the confused lady to go after Chirico once again, and leads her to the waiting Brutishdog.

As Rochina and his men monitor police radio reports, Chirico moves toward police headquarters to find his enemies. Spotting a caravan of vehicles approaching on a highway overpass, he blows out the support beams, bringing the cops to a crashing halt. Abruptly, a helicopter launches its missiles at the customized A.T., disabling its compressor system and forcing Chirico to abandon it for Gotho's Scopedog.

As Chirico enters headquarters in his new A.T., Proto-1 finds him and fires from her red Brutishdog. Chirico quickly evades her and moves inside as the base falls into panic, policemen running for their lives from the seemingly invincible enemy. Just as Chirico gets Boro in his sights, Proto-1 attacks again, this time battering the Scopedog in hand-to-hand combat. Through an entirely unexpected maneuver, Chirico triumphs and she surrenders.

Rochina has now reached a decision. Chirico has single-handedly uprooted the corrupt police force, and the Merukian army can now move in.

Chirico has a quiet moment with Proto-1, now his captive in the deserted headquarters tower. Calmly, he frees her from her bonds and offers her his knife.

"Want to kill me?" She shakes her head. "What's your name," he asks.

"Proto-1."

"What kind of name is that?"

"The only one I've ever known."

EPISODE 12 BONDS

As the Uodo Police regroup and keep a close watch for activity from Chirico, Boro and Esukal confer in a trolley-truck. Speculation from Esukal runs high that Proto-1 could have caused this turmoil and that she may even be a Merukian spy.

Of course, she is nothing of the sort,

and this becomes obvious as Chirico speaks with her about their first meeting on RID. He has been very much on her mind as well. When he asks her why she stayed with and obeyed Boro and the others, however, she has no good answer and breaks into tears.

Outside, the police have concocted a desperate plan to strike back at the intruder, and a platoon of hardy officers are sent in to take up strategic positions. Two of them rush Chirico and Proto-1, interrupting their heart-to-heart with a few rounds of lead. They are quick to duck behind their respective A.T.'s, and when Proto-1 shoots back, wounding one of their attackers, the cops pull out. The two A.T. pilots decide the time has come to move out, and as they climb into their machines, Chirico stops her.

"They forced me to fight my own commanding officers. I don't want to kill you as well."

She answers with a nod and reassuring smile.

Awaiting their next move, Boro and Esukal work out a viable backup plan once the two A.T. pilots finish with the police in the tower. Esukal wants to level the place with a missile, but Boro protests.

"Armored Troopers," he suggests, "We'll send in Armored Troopers from Bottle Ring!" Guessing the implications, Esukal consents.

Waiting elsewhere in their A.T. truck, Gotho's group receives the awaited transmission from Chirico. They are relieved that he now plans to move out and suggests a rendezvous point, but are stunned (especially Coconna) when they hear Proto-1's voice.

"Who is that," Coconna screeches, but Chirico and his new companion have sealed their hatches and started moving.

In a nearby section of the city, the A.T. pilots from the Battle Ring stock have gathered with their robots. At first, they respond callously to Esukal's proposal, but when Chirico's name is mentioned, they display more interest.

As Esukal addresses the ill-mannered Battle Ring pilots, his attitude becomes very imposing and threatening. His uniform and bearing

provide part of the image, but his manner is much more controlled than when he is forced to deal with a problem or answer to Albert Kiri.

This probably arises from the low-class nature of his audience, whereas he is always unnerved when forced to deal directly with someone on Chirico's level. Insecurities abound in this man's psyche.

The plan decided, the police move into action. Esukal commands a squadron of helicopters to begin firing on the tower to promote some response from the two renegades inside. Seeing this, Coconna implores Gotho and Vanilla to do something, but there is little they can do from this position. When the communication lines to Chirico are blocked by the barrage, she becomes more insistent. When the two men still refuse to interfere, she pulls Vanilla's own gun on him. Gotho tries to convince her they are simply powerless, but then remembers the underground monorail they used in episode 6. Realizing it can take them into the lower part of the police tower, Vanilla turns the truck around and heads for it.

Following a pair of persistent cops, Chirico and Proto-1 are lead into a storage chamber--and a bazooka ambush. After dealing (explosively) with the police, they continue on to the elevator that will take them to ground level...but awaiting them at their destination are none other than the pilots from Bottle Ring! As they trade off last minute strategies, however, Chirico overhears their communications and realizes what they are heading into.

Outside, Boro and Esukal receive an angry call from Albert Kiri. They have become an embarrassment; not only does a Jilium shipment disappear from under their noses, but they are now completely uprooted by a single soldier with the knowledge to expose them.

As Kiri unloads a barrage of threats on his subordinates, the elevator reaches the ambush floor--but it opens not to reveal two doomed A.T.'s, but a huge explosion that wipes out more than half the opposition.

Chirico and Proto-1 must now descend by the stairwells, and are quickly attacked by the surviving pilots. A

tense running battle begins, and the scene shifts again to Jan Paul Rochina, who prepares for the incoming Merukian forces and gets final confirmation from Battental; the planes are on their way, and Rochina's battlefield assignment is to seek out and capture Esukai himself.

In the monorail tunnel, Gotho and the others pull up and board the train. Coconna hands Vanilla his gun back and apologizes, but is beside herself when Vanilla points out the safety catch was on the entire time. They warm up the car and zoom off toward the headquarters tower.

Somewhere in that tower, Chirico and Proto-1 have just finished off the last A.T. pilot when another group of cops target the Brutishdog with bazookas, blowing Proto-1 right out of her cockpit.

Chirico sees her and shouts.

"FYANA!!"

Rushing forward, he scoops her up in his Scopedog's arms and engages roller dash, bearing his precious burden away from the attackers. Finding temporary cover, he asks her if she is all right.

"What did you call out," she asks. But he is speechless. "You called me...Fyana. I like that name. May I keep it as my own?"

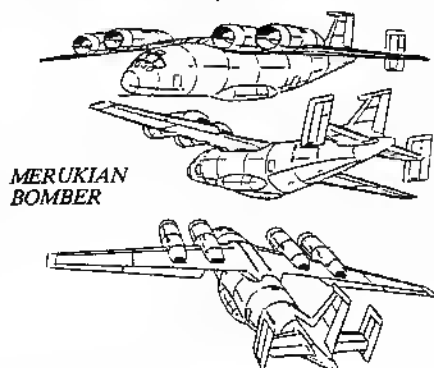
The naming of Fyana in this episode is the first major step in her relationship with Chirico. By giving the Fantam Lady her first "real" name, Chirico endears himself to her. The harsh and disrespectful "Proto-1" has been bypassed, and Fyana now has contact with someone who regards her as more than a subordinate. It is this event that inspires the beginnings of the independent nature she must adopt before she can reject her ties with the Secret Society.

Still tongue-tied, Chirico follows her directions out of the tower, right through another gauntlet of police who unleash a new barrage--neatly blowing off one of the Scopedog's arms, sending the two escapees sprawling in different directions. Chirico is hurled straight through a hole in the wall and down onto the monorail track below, landing right in front of Gotho's appropriated car.

Gotho and the others shout for him to climb on, but Chirico wants nothing but to rush back up and

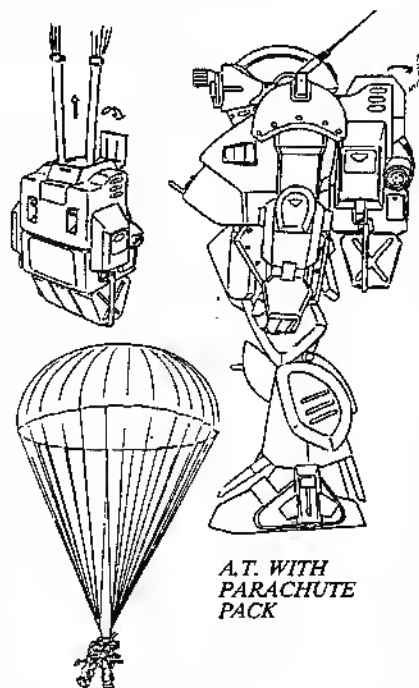
save Fyana. She, however, has been grabbed by a pair of cops and carried away. Chirico fires after them in vain, and sees no resort but to jump onto the car and seek her out another time.

Far above, police sentries hear a noise and look up. The greying sky is filled with Merukian bombers, and as Armored Troopers begin parachuting out by the dozen, a rain of death begins.



MERUKIAN BOMBER

EPISODE 13 THE ESCAPE



A.T. WITH PARACHUTE PACK

Police sirens split the night air as a deluge of Merukian Scopedogs descend from the air. Esukai, Boro, and Proto-1 can only watch helplessly from their office in the surface section of the now-reclaimed police tower.

Far below, Gotho tries unsuccessfully to cheer up a dejected Chirico as they speed to safety on

the monorail.

On the Uoodo airstrip, Rochina steps up, surveys the invading force, and makes a bullhorn announcement to the war criminals in the tower. Esukai and Boro confer on what to do about Rochina's demands as the Merukian commander gets a report about his main objective. She is here.

Esukai has made the only decision he can: to notify Albert Kiri of the dilemma. Kiri is, of course, less than pleased, but since he can ill-afford for his people to fall into the hands of the army they betrayed, he sees no recourse but to send aid. Esukai is ordered to stand fast and Boro to take Proto-1 to the police heliport for flight away from Uoodo.

Unsatisfied with his lack of response, Rochina orders his army to move in, and a fierce firefight begins as the A.T.'s close in on the armed police vehicles.

In one of the subterranean levels of the city, Fantam Lady's car speeds quietly away from the police tower, carrying her and Boro. They are attacked by stray A.T.'s, but manage to fend them off and zoom away.

As Chirico argues with Gotho and the others about their options (and the lady he wants to rescue), the tunnel in front of them abruptly collapses, bringing the train to a halt. Chirico immediately jumps out and climbs to the level above to discover the cause--police shooting it out with Merukian Scopedogs.

Recognizing the A.T.'s markings, Chirico finally makes the connection; these are the same type he fought on RID. He imparts all of this to the rest, explaining that Fyana is actually a Perfect Soldier, captured and forced to work for the Secret Society. The point of the Merukian raid is to reclaim her--she is a valuable weapon. Vanilla realizes Chirico also wants to claim her, and Chirico confirms his suspicion.

Chirico's knowledge of the term "Perfect Soldier" apparently came from his earlier discussion with Fyana. He recognizes her as a human with extremely amplified combat skills, but it is unclear whether or not he is aware of her artificial origins.

It is safe to assume that Boro knows everything about her (especially after

the memory examination in episode 11), but she still may not be comfortable enough with the thought of artificial creation to have passed the entire revelation on to Chirico at this point in the story.

The A.T.'s have now entered the police tower and close in on Esukai's level. He receives an alert from his personal guard when they are overwhelmed...and as he runs for the door, and explosion hurls him back. In walks Rochina. Disappointed when Esukai is pronounced dead, he orders his men to search for the lady.

Elsewhere in the city, an A.T. targets Fantam Lady's car and blows it away—but no one is inside it now but the driver. Chirico's group hears of this via a stray radio report and deduce where she has gone—the heliport. Vanilla is apprehensive about returning there, but one mention of Jijirum is all it takes to spur him on.

Above on the airstrip, a car leaving the city is stopped by Merukian A.T.'s. Out steps a mortician, who claims to be taking two bodies out into the desert for burial. The pilots let him pass, unaware he is actually Boro in

disguise.

As Chirico and the others travel to the heliport underground, Boro's car arrives simultaneously. Chirico issues split-up orders and Boro waits in Proto-1's apartment for the arrival of Kiri's men. Proto-1 adjourns herself for a quick Jijirum shower and he stares after her, doubts beginning to grow in his mind.

Back in the late Esukai's office, Rochina receives a disturbing report. No trace of the lady has been found.

But Chirico knows exactly where to find her...and does so just as she finishes showering.

"Chirico," she warns, "they're right in the next room! You must leave here quickly!"

"But I came for you. I want to take you away with me."

Fyana is saddened. She wants to go, but is held captive by her dependence on the revitalizing Jijirum shower. They are interrupted by the sound of gunfire—Vanilla has fallen into the thick of things outside.

Boro hears of this and assumes Chirico has arrived. But that isn't all he has to worry about—the Merukian

A.T.'s are now closing in on the heliport and make their presence known by wiping out the squad of police who are chasing Vanilla.

Gotho and Coconna quickly move into action, creatively appropriating a Merukian Scopedog for Chirico, who has just rejoined them...alone.

But as the Merukians move down into the heliport, a new party joins the fray—helicopters sent by Albert Kiri carrying a battalion of reinforcements. Boro gloats as he and Proto-1 board a cargo chopper and watch the new Armored Troopers arrive.

Elsewhere within the embattled base, Gotho and Coconna flee to safety while Chirico hides from a platoon of Scopedogs that is suddenly assaulted and wiped out by the new arrivals. He stares in disbelief at them: they are Standing Tortoises, a type of A.T. never before seen in Uoodo.

And there is little he can do against them, for both the heliport and Uoodo are collapsing and the carnage has cut him off from his companions. All there is to do is find his way through the fires to safety...and live to fight again another day.



ARMORED
TROOPER
VOTOMS

装甲騎兵

ボトムズ

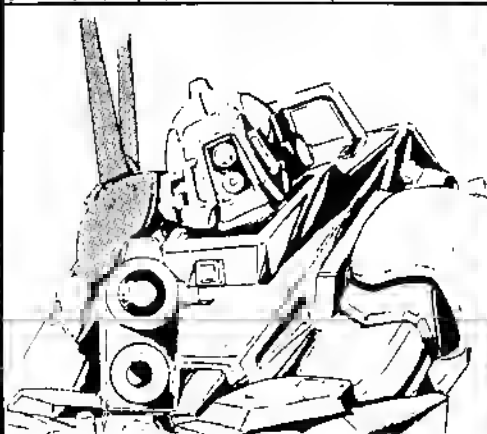
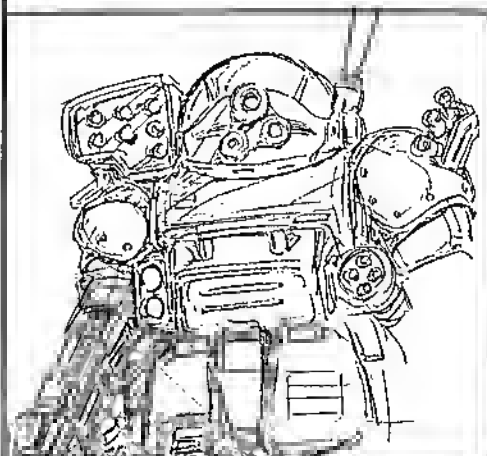
VIEWER'S GUIDE
PART 4

THE LAST RED SHOULDER

ORIGINAL VIDEO

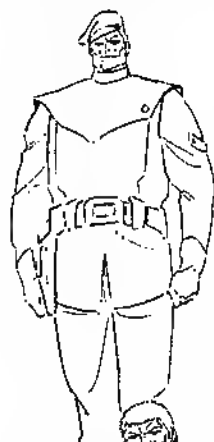
Although written and animated over a year after the end of the TV series, this story fits perfectly between episodes 13 and 14, the transition point between Uoodo and Kummen. Somewhere on the same unnamed planet, Chirico and a trio of former Red Shoulders pursue the man who cast them out: Yoran Peruzen. They are unprepared, however, for the deadly consequences of his involvement with the Secret Society, which has produced perhaps the most dangerous opponent Chirico will ever face.

THE LAST RED SHOULDER expands nicely on the characterization of Chirico and the others, providing both helpful background information and intriguing new twists that fill several of the story holes left vacant by the TV series.



GREGORU GAROSH

Former member of the 24th Merukion Army's elite Red Shoulder Battalion. Stripped of rank and dishonorably discharged, he now manages a Battle Ring in the city of Bakara somewhere across the desert from Uoodo. Gregoru is an easy-going man with an even temperament and dependable nature. He has accepted his fate and even manages to live well despite his unsavory background.



BAIMAN HAGGARD

Former member of the 24th Merukion Army's elite Red Shoulder Battalion. Stripped of rank and dishonorably discharged, Baiman now co-manages the Bakara Battle Ring with Gregoru. Baiman is a laid-back, slightly smarmy individual who shies away from physical confrontations apparently in an effort to forget his past. In reality, he carries a dark secret from his days in the Red Shoulder Battalion which he shares only with Chirico.



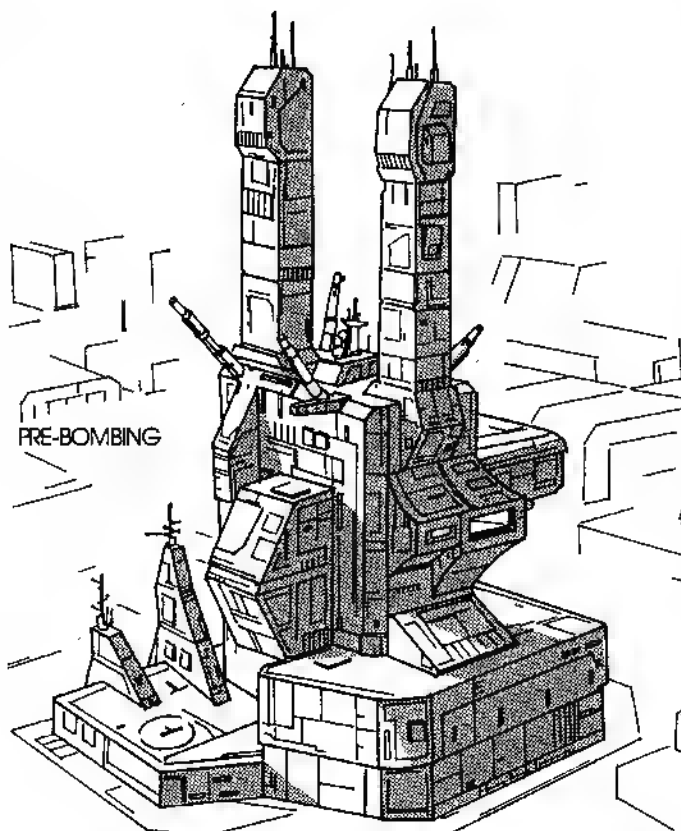
MUZA MERRE

Former member of the 24th Merukion Army's elite Red Shoulder Battalion. Stripped of rank and dishonorably discharged, Muza works as a mechanic in Gregoru's Battle Ring at Bakara. Unlike Gregoru and Baiman, Muza is slightly withdrawn and broods often on the meager and life has dealt him. His grim nature clashes with Baiman's callousness, and the two are often at odds with each other because of the high tension that results.

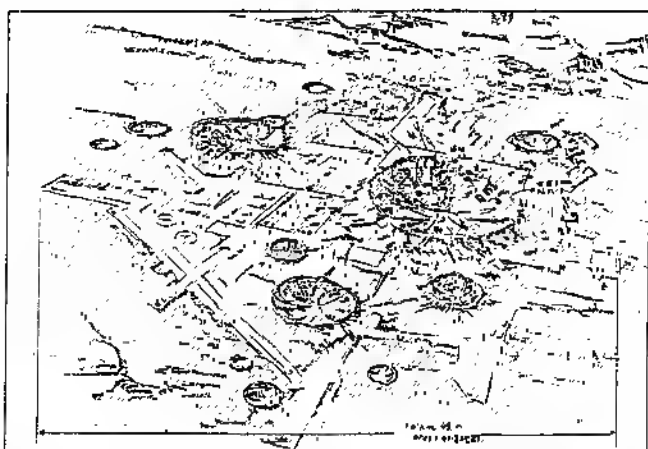


YORAN PERUZEN

Peruzen is the notorious former General of Red Shoulder Battalion who still resides in Deraida Base despite its collapse. The mastermind behind Red Shoulder, Peruzen has created an aura of death about himself, and remains hidden from the ghosts of his past and all he has wrought. He has now allied himself with Albert Kiri and the Secret Society and acts as a major consultant in the sinister experiment they have begun at Deraida Base.



PRE-BOMBING

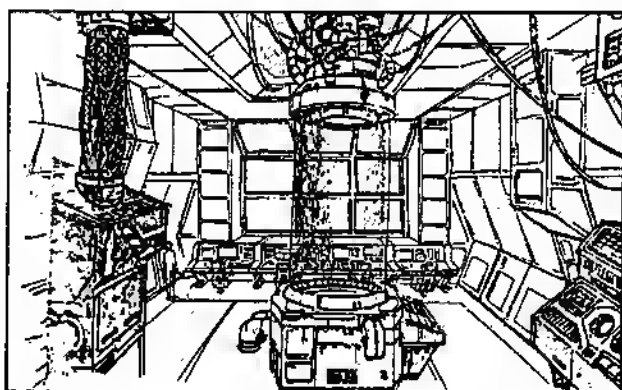


POST-BOMBING

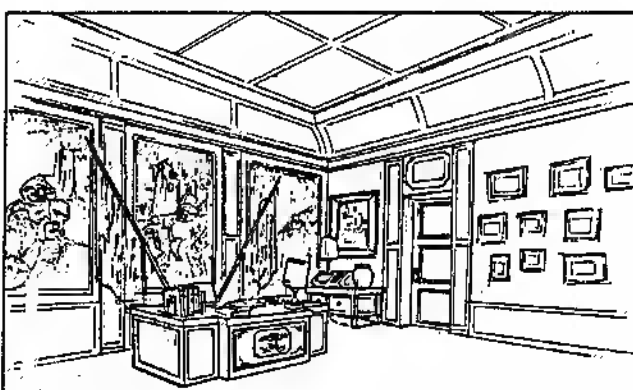
DERAIDA BASE

Once a central base for the 24th Merukian Army's Red Shoulder Battalion, Deraida Base fell to a Baladant bombing attack in Galactic Year 7213. Now, subterranean portions of the base remain active beneath the surface of the desert. Peruzen and his men take advantage of this natural cover to conceal their presence from the galaxy-at-large, and the Secret Society has also begun to use Deraida Base for its own purposes.

Deraida remains well hidden and is constantly patrolled by the high-powered Bloodsucker A.T.'s.

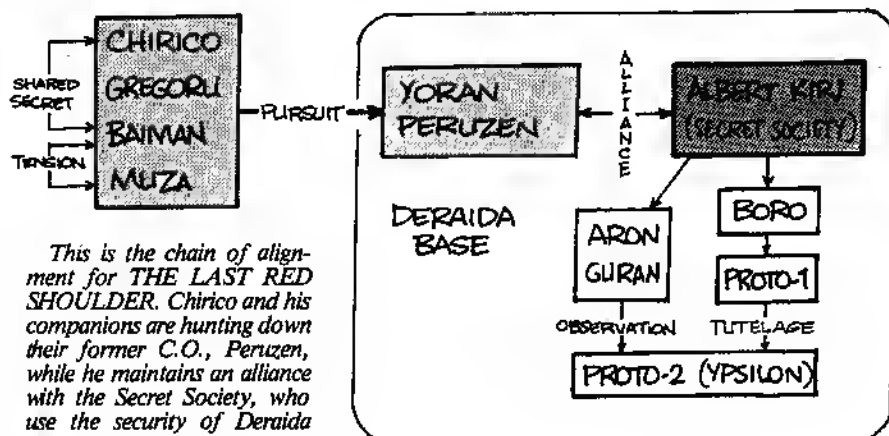


MONITOR ROOM/JUIRUM SHOWER

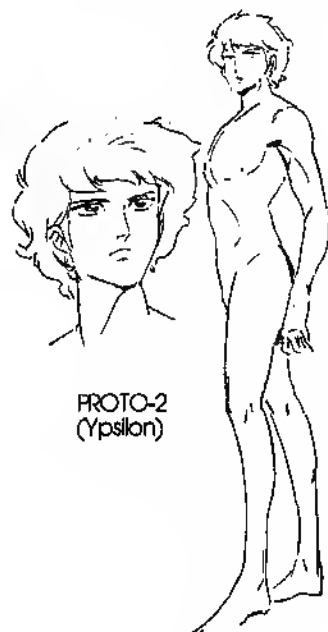


PERUZEN'S STUDY

ALIGNMENT CHART



This is the chain of alignment for **THE LAST RED SHOULDER**. Chirico and his companions are hunting down their former C.O., Peruzen, while he maintains an alliance with the Secret Society, who use the security of Deraida Base to produce Proto-2.



PROTO-2
(Ypsilon)

ASTRAGIUS GALAXY, 7213 PROLOGUE

Merukian army helicopters launch into the night air surrounding Deraida Base as a military assembly disperses on the open-air landing field. A garrison of the remnants of Red Shoulder Battalion receives reassignment orders now that the Hundred-Year's War has ended, and a hatchet-faced officer now addresses four remaining soldiers: Gregoru Garosh, Baiman Haggard, Muza Merre, and Chirico Cuvie. These four in particular have different orders to follow.

"You four do not fit in," the officer growls, "you have served Red Shoulder Battalion, but your rebellious natures have earned you only dishonorable discharge!"

Gregoru, Baiman and Muza accept their fate and walk quietly away, but Chirico remains at rigid attention, staring icily at the officer.

"Who's idea was this," he asks as his comrades watch nervously.

"You forget the code of Red Shoulder Battalion," the officer spits back, "unquestioning obedience...or death!"



"Who gave these orders?"

"If you want to live, you'll do as you're told!"

Another set of chopper blades spins to life, lifting Chirico into the air and away from his past. As he gives Deraida Base one final glimpse, he catches sight of a silhouetted figure watching from his office, grinning mockingly at the departing soldier—Yoran Peruzen.



ASTRAGIUS GALAXY, 7214 THE LAST RED SHOULDER

Escaping the fall of Uoodo, Chirico Cuvie has wandered across the surrounding desert to Bakara City, where three comrades await his arrival: Gregoru, Baiman, and Muza. They tinker with derelict Scopedogs in preparation for an upcoming task they have agreed to aid him with.



They are genuinely pleased to see Chirico when he arrives, but he simply grunts a reserved greeting and climbs into a waiting Scopedog for a

quick spin in the lot outside their warehouse. In a skillful display of his A.T. piloting ability, he whips around and activates the braking turnpicks to discover they will not function properly. This discovered, the four former Red Shoulders go to work reassembling a quartet of Scopedogs from scrap parts.

As they work, Baiman quietly approaches Chirico.

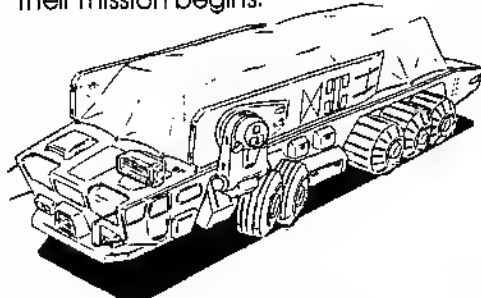
"You're very grim," Baiman observes, "I think you have seen too much of the war. It's left its mark on you, like the rest of us. Gregoru was shot long ago, and poor Muza came back to find his entire family killed."

"Not to mention what happened to you," Chirico returns, encouraging a snicker from his friend.

The four work through the night despite the outbreak of more than one argument between Baiman and Muza. As morning approaches, they step back to examine their handiwork...four Scopedog Turbo

Customs, fully outfitted with gun pods, missile launchers, and jet-powered roller dash.

Chirico expresses a lack of confidence in the A.T.'s; they have been literally thrown together out of spare parts and must stand up to top-of-the-line opposition...but this is the best they can manage, so it will have to do. Mutual agreement reached, their mission begins.



As morning stretches itself across the sky, an A.T. trailer truck leaves Bakara City for the desert. It carries the four Turbo Customs and the men that built them. As maps are produced from Baiman in the back

seat with Muza, Chirico ponders their mission--to track down the remains of Deraida Base and find the one man that he now believes to have brought their lives to this state: Yoran Peruzen.

Balman knows of several underground garden sections of Deraida Base that may have survived the bombing, and the infrared photomaps are calibrated to home in on their energy readings.



The trailer truck passes the last vestige of Bakara--the steel skeleton of an ancient space vessel--and Chirico remembers someone who has come to mean more to him than anything in his life: Fyana.

Far away, sunlight pours into a lush, green garden as a soft voice tenderly wakes a sleeping figure.

"Ypsilon...can you hear me?"

The figure, an unclothed male youth with a head of flowing white hair stirs and opens his eyes to see the delicate face and endearing brown eyes of Fyana. She speaks lovingly to him, introducing herself as Proto-1, and draws him gently to his feet to discover his new world.

She leads him through the garden by his trembling hand, and he stares in wonder at the vegetation--when a bird suddenly flits by his head, screeching loudly. Shrieking in fear, Ypsilon cowers to the ground and Fyana comforts him with motherly words and a disarming smile. Reassured, he rises again and follows her into the green. From behind nearby trees, a hand clutches the end of a cane...and another figure watches their every move.

Gregoru's trailer truck rumbles over the barren terrain as the four soldiers discuss their task. Peruzen has now left the Meruklan Army and may no longer even be at Deraida Base, so Balman questions why they bother searching the radiation-scorched ruins of Deraida instead of somewhere more accommodating.

Chirico points out Peruzen's unpredictable nature by reminding

them that the former General actually wanted them killed when the Battalion was disbanded, but instead simply let them go to fend for themselves.

Anticipating what they might be wandering into, Muza remembers that there are 34 to 35 Red Shoulders still in service, and they probably all now protect their leader.

"That leaves about eight of them to one of us," Balman taunts. "do you think you can handle it?"

This inspires another argument between them, which Gregoru curbs before it can come to blows. Muza turns away from a grinning Balman and broods as Chirico examines the photomaps. By placing the infrared filter over the map plates, he watches as a spot glows to life and spreads out in an even configuration--Deraida!

In the garden, Fyana leads Ypsilon to a pond where fish dart to and fro under the water. But something else is down there with them--a camera that feeds a signal to a nearby monitoring station where malevolent eyes watch Ypsilon's every move: Albert Kiri, Aron, Guran, and Boro. Boro questions the procedure and if it is safe for Proto-1 to be with Ypsilon this way. The others reassure him that it is the best method of program input. Ypsilon's mind is still that of a child, and does not look upon his teacher as anything more than just that. Everything goes as planned.

Deciding the time is right to introduce Ypsilon to more fauna, Fyana directs his attention to a nearby tree, where a beetle crawls upward. Inquisitive, Ypsilon reaches for it--and recoils in pain as the insect stings his finger and buzzes away.

Ypsilon suddenly turns vicious, swinging at his attacker and smashing it out of midair to crush it to the ground. He wildly squashes it flat and continues to strike it even after it has been reduced to mush.

This illicit a cry of delight from Boro, of horror from Fyana. She screams for him to stop.

Abruptly, Ypsilon stops and looks in bewilderment at what he has done. Sadly, Fyana explains that the insect, like the bird, meant him no harm and merely attacked out of self-preservation. She then must tell him of death and all its consequences. Slowly comprehending, tears glimmer at the edges of his eyes.

Later, he rests peacefully in her lap as she fondly strokes his hair...and looks up to see three figures approach; Boro, Guran, and Aron with a tranquilizer gun. When Boro announces they have come to remove Ypsilon from the garden, Fyana protests. This upsets her student, who suddenly rushes to attack, laying into Aron with a powerful blow to the face.

Boro seizes Fyana by the arm, demanding to know why she does





ing Ypsilon.

Peruzen tells her he created Ypsilon as the ultimate fighter, but also wished to introduce emotions in his mind under controlled conditions. She suggests that if Ypsilon were created as a fighting machine, he should remain as such, without human feelings to confuse his mind.

Peruzen, however, tells her of his earlier attempt at developing a fighter--namely Chirico Cuvie, whose emotions were too far advanced to control. When they were tampered with, he became an uncontrollable rebel. To Fyana's horror, Peruzen coldly announces that Ypsilon is being made human as training to fight Chirico...and Peruzen does not want Chirico to be killed by a mere machine!

Elsewhere in the base, Fyana's cries echo in his mind as Ypsilon undergoes his first Jilrum shower, admired by Aron and Guran as they watch his every move.

Above in the desert, twilight settles as Chirico's group dines on C rations around a campfire on the rim of Deraida Crater. Muza continues to brood, and when Baiman comments on this, he coldly announces that he wants to quit their mission--because he no longer wants any part of Baiman's company. This erupts into another argument--and then an all-out brawl when Muza explodes and punches Baiman's smirking face! Baiman growls that he doesn't want to hit Muza, but the smaller man lunges into a series of brutal punches that land Baiman on his back before Gregoru can seize Muza to stop him.

"Get up," Muza challenges, "fight me, Baiman! Why don't you fight?"

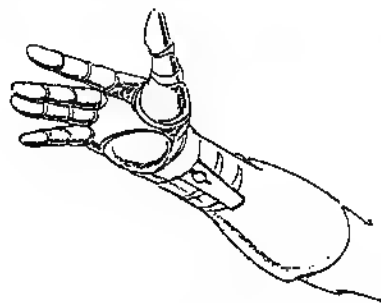
"He can't fight you," Chirico says, rising with a blazing stick from the fire, "this is why."

Chirico drops the burning wood onto Baiman's right hand, and Gregoru shouts in horror, beating the flame out with his jacket as it burns away Baiman's glove. But as the fire goes out, cold metal glints from underneath. Baiman's right hand and forearm are mechanical!

Chuckling, Baiman rises as Muza stares dumbly.

"How...how can it work," he finally

asks, "how do you live with that kind of hand?"



"It's the very best kind," Baiman states quietly, "to close around Peruzen's neck."

Baiman walks away to the trailer truck as Muza watches him, at more than a loss for words.

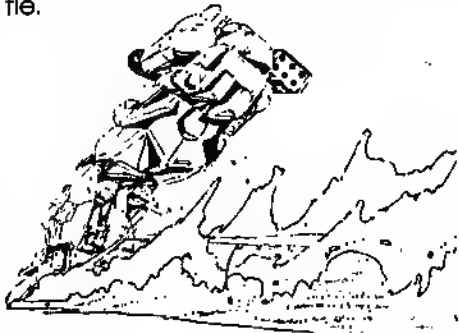
Full darkness envelops Deraida Crater as the four Red Shoulders power up their A.T.'s and march to the edge of the crater to examine their objective. Gregoru looks over the area and confirms the find--an entrance hatch is nestled into the rocky surface.

Below, Fyana rests against a tree in the garden in silent meditation, then looks up to see an approaching figure. She gasps.

Ypsilon now wears battle clothing.

Above, the clouds rumble as rain begins to fall, and Baiman breaks the tension to ask Muza if he still wants to leave them. Muza answers quietly that he will remain, and Gregoru interrupts with a new observation: movement. Red Shoulders patrol the grounds before them in the worst kind of opposition they could anticipate--Bloodsuckers!

Now that the enemy has been spotted, the group moves into action. Gregoru fires off his shoulder missiles straight at the Bloodsuckers and the four Scopedogs bound over the rim of the crater, kicking in the jet boosters to speed into battle.



not stop Ypsilon. The enraged youth thrusts himself between them and tackles Boro, raising a fist to smash him in the face. Just as he prepares to land the blow, Fyana screams,

"STOP!"

This is enough to give him pause, in which time a gunshot is heard--and Ypsilon's body slumps over Boro's, immobilized by a tranquilizer dart.

As his assistants pull the youth off him, Boro hurls threats at Proto-1 for her actions when a grim figure intercedes.

"No. We still need her."

"G--General Peruzen."



Fyana takes advantage of the awkward moment to come forward and address the former Red Shoulder leader.

"Now I have some questions."

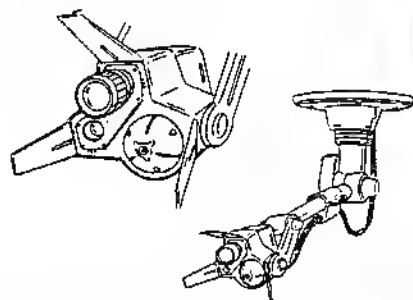
She follows Peruzen into his study, the walls of which are covered with photos of Scopedogs and soldiers...mute reminders of the days of Red Shoulder Battalion. Surrounded by the silent memoirs, she asks him why he takes these actions in develop-

Hearing the rumble of the explosion above, Ypsilon jolts up and Fyana holds him from going.

"You musn't go--there is still something very important for you to learn!"

The sounds of battle ignite his instincts, however, outweighing her words. He runs despite her cries for him to come back.

Finishing off the initial resistance, Chirico and his group plant explosives on the hatchway, blow it open, and descend into the first underground level of Deraida Base. Enveloped in darkness, they speed downward through pitch black corridors and deadly automated laser defenses.



As light appears ahead, so do more Bloodsuckers, and the quartet of Invaders plunge into battle again.

In the monitor room, their entrance is observed by Boro, who turns to Peruzen.

"They're attacking! I thought they were your followers!"

"They might have been, once," Peruzen answers, "long ago."

Boro suddenly gasps with the realization that their attacker is none other than Chirico Cuvie!

"Impossible," Kiri insists, "he couldn't have escaped Uodol!"

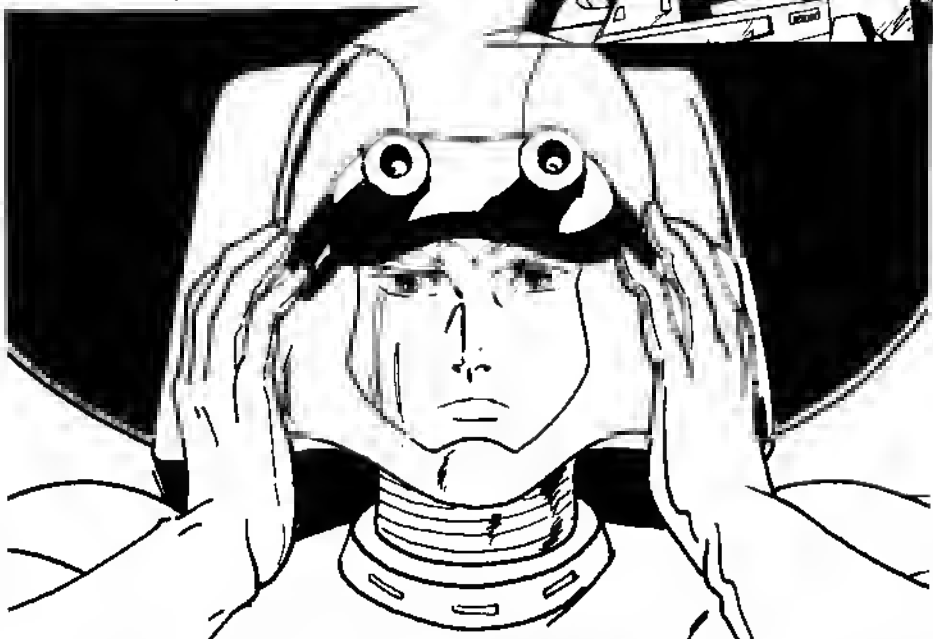
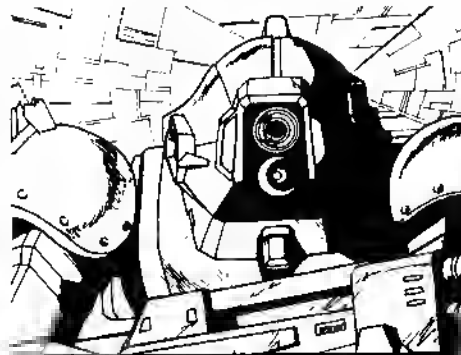
"Yes, he could," Boro counters, "he is a murder weapon—even better than a Perfect Soldier!" They bolt from the room to round up Ypsilon, leaving Peruzen alone to watch his post catch up with him.

Reaching a cavernous junction, the Turbo Customs mix it up with more defending Bloodsuckers. Ducking into another corridor, Chirico moves on with Gregoru and Muza when Bolman volunteers to stay behind and deal with these opponents.

Elsewhere in the base, Fyana catches up to Ypsilon and tries to teach him the remaining lesson—before he

flights, he must learn how to love.

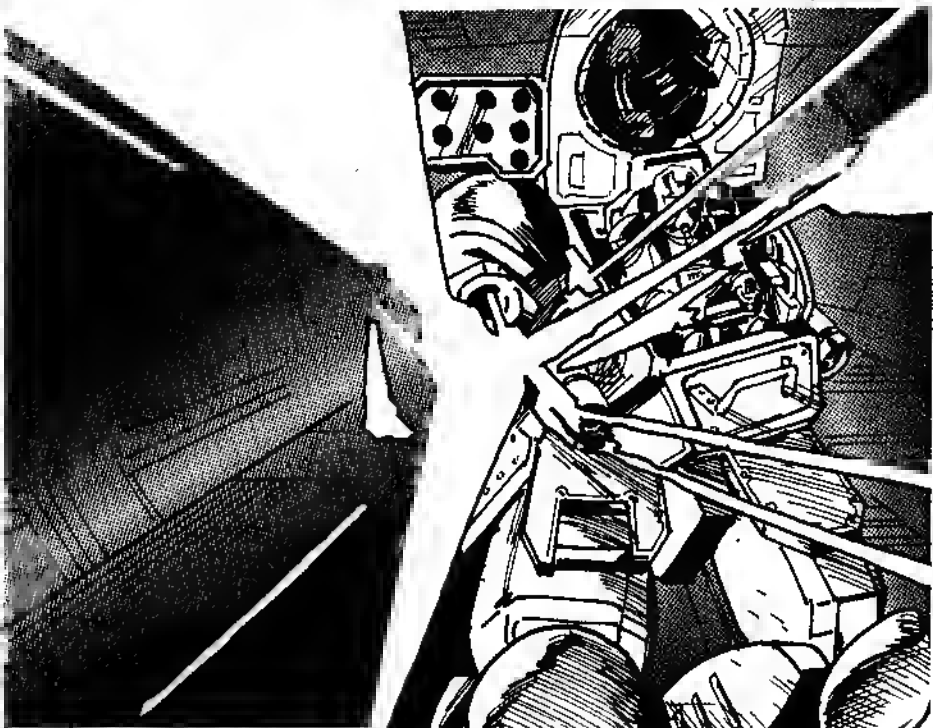
"I...don't understand," he apologizes, and sprints away from her just in time to see the Invading A.T.'s rocket by and overcome a Bloodsucker that collapses in front of him. Silently, he drags the lifeless pilot out of the cockpit and dimbs in, reactivating the still-functional A.T. and speeding away. Fyana can only watch in quiet helplessness.



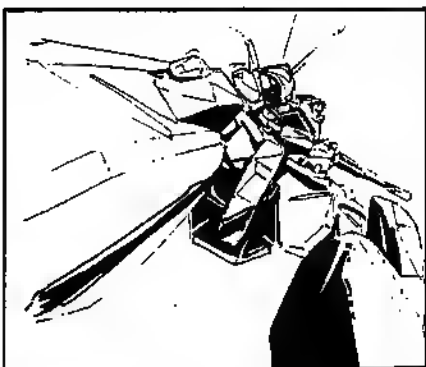
As Ypsilon approaches Chirico's group, they spot him coming up from behind. Muza turns to launch a barrage of missiles at him, which he evades with ease. His aggressive nature challenged, Muza launches forward to

engage Ypsilon head on, but the latter skillfully rockets over him, knocking his Scopedog to the floor.

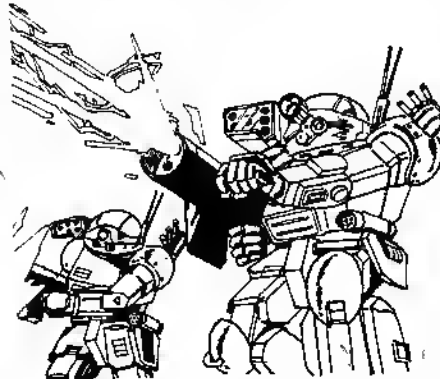
Chirico observes the Bloodsucker's movements and his interest is piqued...there is something familiar



about this new attacker, but he cannot decide what.



Muza rises, cursing, and fires on Ypsilon, but the P.S. turns and heads straight for his attacker. In a tremendous burst, Muza becomes the first casualty in Chirico's mission, and the remaining two choose to lose the new opponent by launching more missile pods, creating a pall of smoke through which they escape.



Splitting temporarily away from Gregoru, Chirico pulls into a side corridor for a breather and is observed by another...a camera eye feeds its view straight back to Peruzen!

The former General speaks with his attacker, who promises to make his death as painful as possible.

"You'll never reach me, Chirico," Peruzen threatens, "the one after you is my creation...there is no way for you to beat it!"

"We'll see," Chirico retorts, but as he speeds back out into the main corridor, Peruzen's creation is there—and instantly lays into him, battering his Scopedog with armor punches.

"Fyana," Chirico implores, "could it be you? Fyana!"

The attacker makes no reply, but as Chirico slumps to the floor, Gregoru arrives on the scene, pulling the Bloodsucker off him and zipping away with it down the corridor. As Chirico recovers,

Gregoru is tossed back and forth by Ypsilon and pinned against a wall by a barrage of punches. His cockpit smashed around him, he becomes the second man to fall to this new enemy.

Ypsilon turns his attention back to Chirico, who is now hesitant to mix it up with the one he thinks is his lost love.

"Fyana...don't you recognize me? It's Chirico!"

Ignoring the confused pleas, Ypsilon chases Chirico into a large chamber—the armory. Backing him against a ledge overlooking a lower section of the chamber, Ypsilon slowly approaches.

"Fyana...why do you fight me?"

Ypsilon launches forward again, driving Chirico over the edge and down a long drop to the floor below.

"Fyana! Stop!"

Chirico tries to rise, but the Bloodsucker is on him again with terrifying speed and batters the Scopedog across the chamber. Chirico is thrown from his cockpit against a wall and lies on the floor in an unconscious daze.

Peruzen appears at the door as Ypsilon opens his hatch to examine his foe.

"He is still alive," Peruzen says, "you must kill him with your bare hands."

Silently, Ypsilon climbs from his Bloodsucker and steps forward to finish his task when he rushes Fyana.

"NO! Don't do that!"

"Kill him, Ypsilon!"

The white-maned Perfect Soldier takes another step toward Chirico's inert body and Fyana sees no recourse but to rush in and turn him away.

"Now I will teach you how to love."

She thrusts herself against him, her lips full on his. Surprised, he stands in stunned silence as she embraces him, still kissing him tightly despite Peruzen's shouts to stop.

Chirico stirs and looks up.

Fyana sees him and stares, shocked, into his eyes.

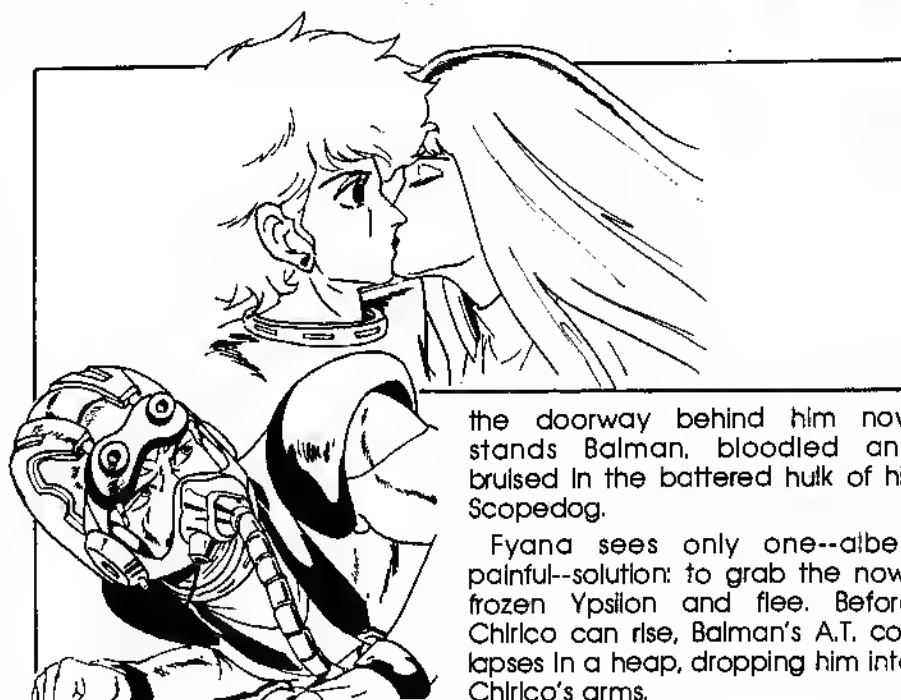
Peruzen steps toward Chirico, gun drawn.

"Very well then," he mutters, "if I must end it myself..."

Bullets fly.



And Peruzen's body twists in agony as it is riddled with gunfire. In



the doorway behind him now stands Balman, bloodied and bruised in the battered hulk of his Scopedog.

Fyana sees only one—albeit painful—solution: to grab the now-frozen Ypsilon and flee. Before Chirico can rise, Balman's A.T. collapses in a heap, dropping him into Chirico's arms.

"Our friends?"

"Dead."

"So...Red Shoulder is over at last," Baiman laughs, "but...I never got my hand...around Peruzen's neck..."

Enjoying his final joke, Baiman closes his eyes and gives up the ghost.

From deep inside Deralda Base, thunder grows as explosions begin, and Kiri's group evacuates into a waiting personnel helicopter, carrying Ypsilon inside. Fyana is the last to board, and she turns to look back a final time.

"Proto-1," Boro shouts, "what are you doing? We're leaving NOW!"



Sadly, she turns and runs into the idling chopper.

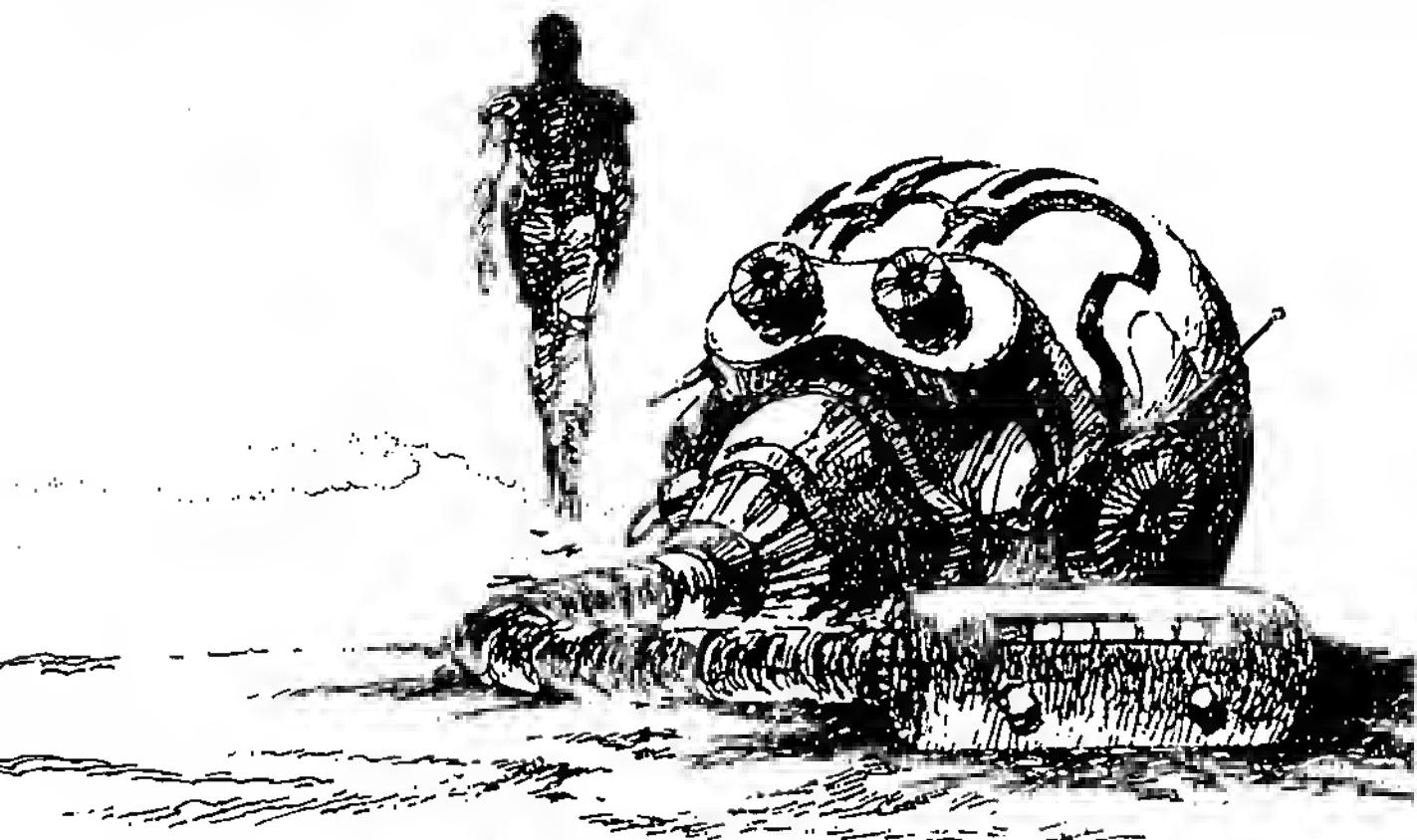
Explosions rock the base as Chirico runs through the now-burning garden of Ypsilon's birth



and out to the heliport just in time to see the chopper lift away. Fyana rushes to the window and stares longingly at him as he stands helplessly watching on the balcony. But there is nothing she can do. He is out of reach once more.

Chirico takes an elevator to the surface and watches the helicopter disappear into the night sky, then sprints for the A.T. trailer truck as Deralda Crater erupts in a tremendous explosion. The base is gone forever.

Chirico drives the truck as far as it will go into the desert. It stalls and he leaves it, wandering away as he began. Alone. The last Red Shoulder.



EPILOGUE

"Vanilla...Vanilla! Wake up! WAKE UP!"



A door opens, spilling light into Coconna's dark bedroom. The figures of Vanilla and Gotho are silhouetted in the doorway.

Sobbing, she tells them she just saw her Chirico in a dream and begs them to help her find him again.

Irritated, Vanilla assures her that she will see him again. He's a survivor. He'll turn up eventually.

"Now," he pleads, "please go back to sleep?"

FORWARD TO KUMMEN.

ARMORED TROOPER VOTOMS

装甲騎兵

ボトムズ

VIEWER'S GUIDE PART 5

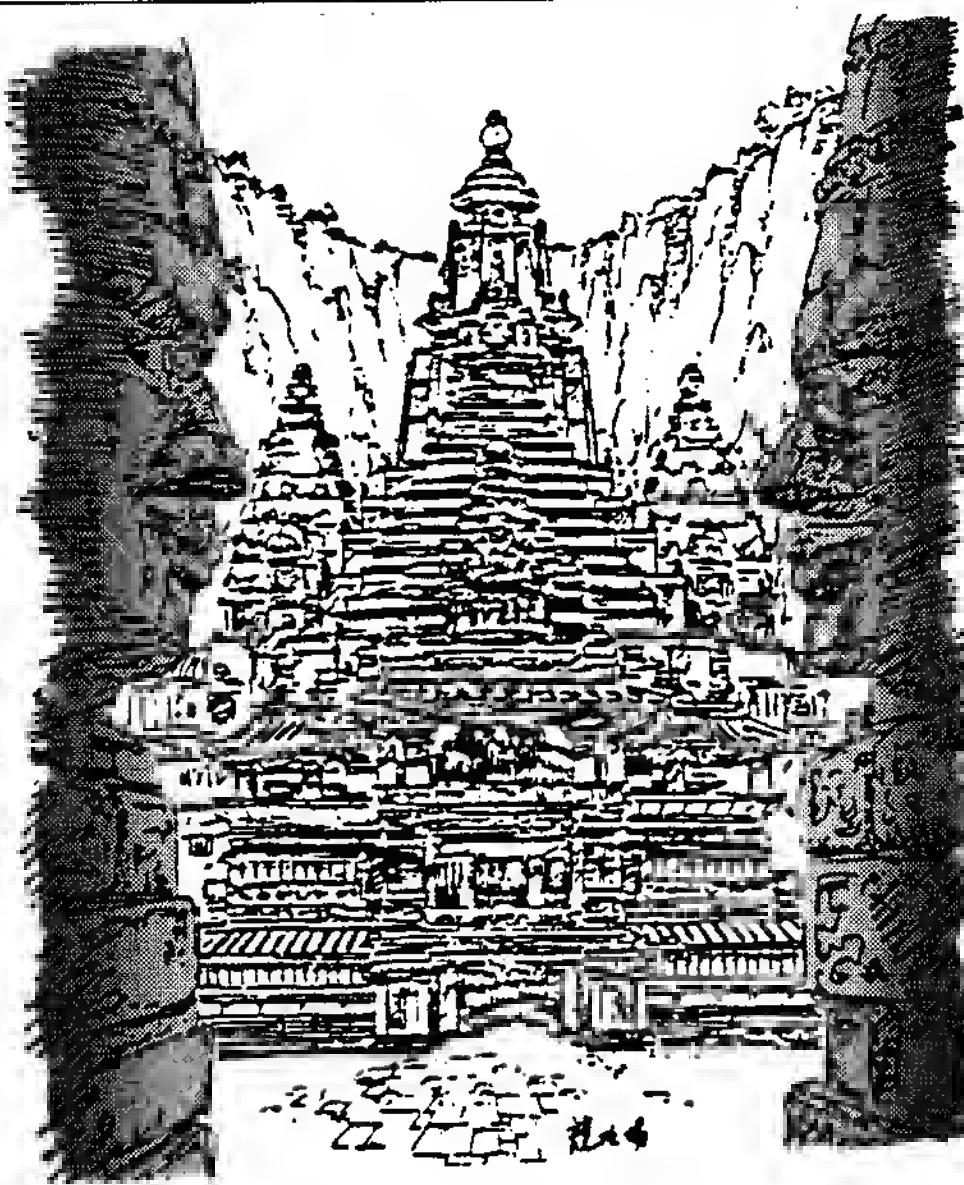
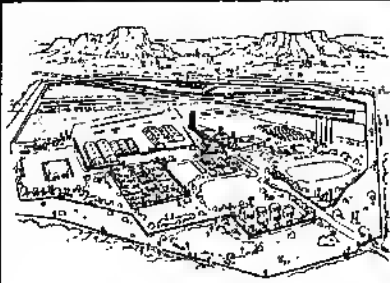
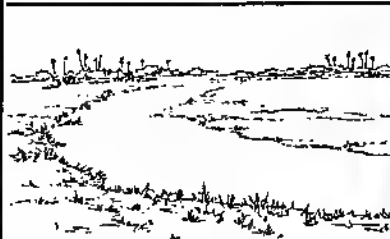
KUMMEN

EPISODES 14-27

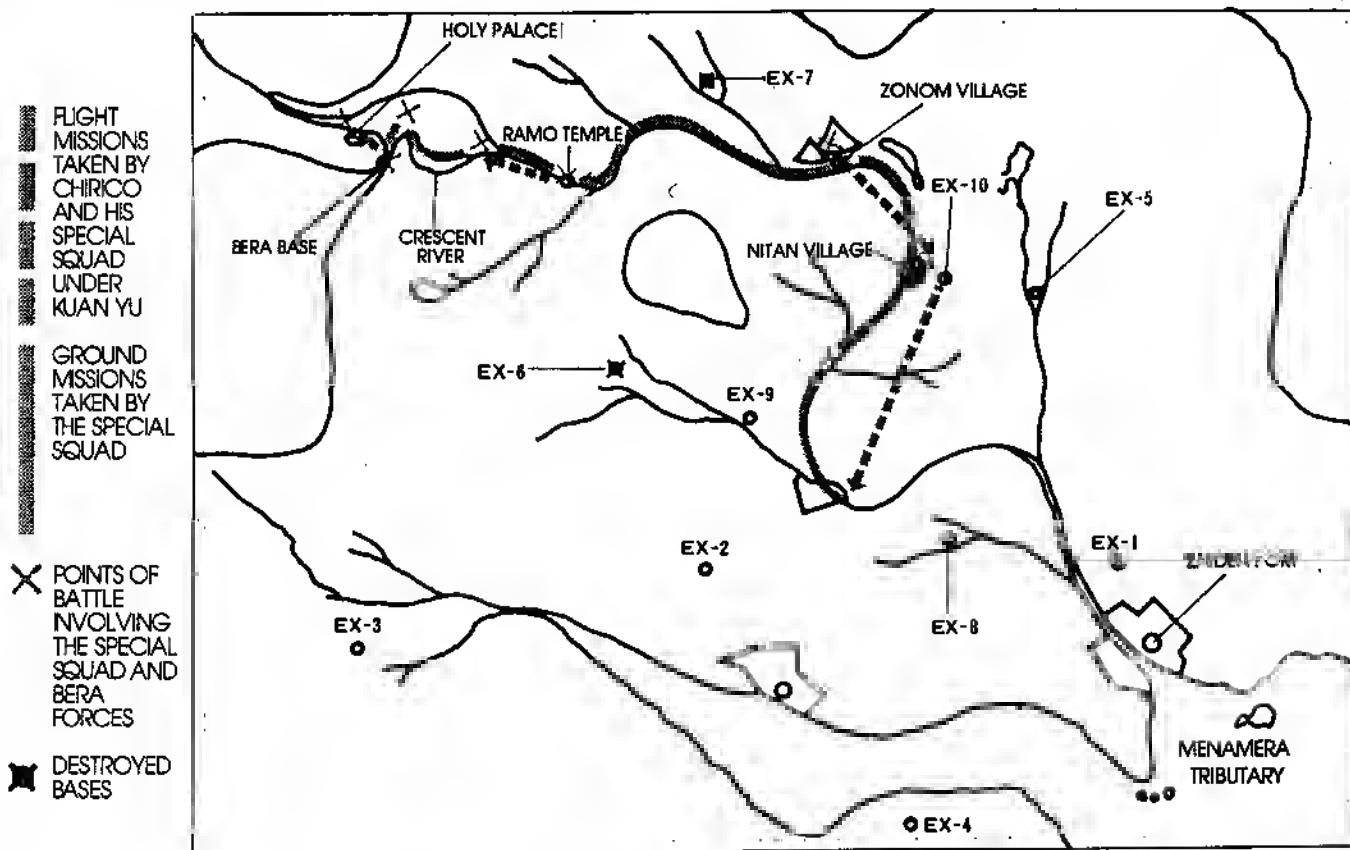
On the same Merukian planet Chirico Cuvie has wandered since his defection from the Merukian Army lies the jungle-choked continent called Kummen. In addition to the peasant villages scattered throughout this land is a coalition of mercenary army bases. When Chirico enlists in one of them, Assemble EX-10, he becomes embroiled in the ongoing conflict between the mercenaries and the mysterious Bera Guerilla Forces that fight for their Holy King Kanjielman and his powerful beliefs.

Also present is Boro and the Secret Society, who have allied themselves with the Holy King to aid him in the battle in return for amnesty. While they pursue financial interests here, as Kummen is rich in petroleum and jirium deposits, Kanjielman takes part in the tutelage of Ypsilon to develop him into the fighter whose destiny it is to pursue and destroy Chirico Cuvie.

The pace of the Votoms series picks up considerably from Chirico's arrival at EX-10 and builds steadily to the penultimate confrontation between the warring factions. Ypsilon comes into his own as Chirico's major nemesis, and Fyana is forced to make her fateful decision to either remain with her superiors or abandon them for Chirico forever.



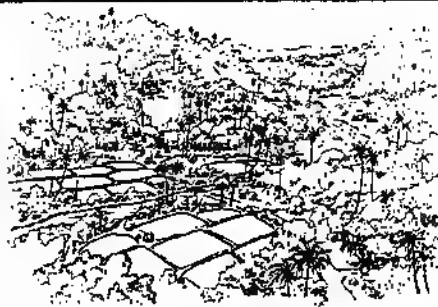
ROUTE MAP



NITAN VILLAGE
(episode 14)



BERA
GUERRILLA
BASE
(episode 24)

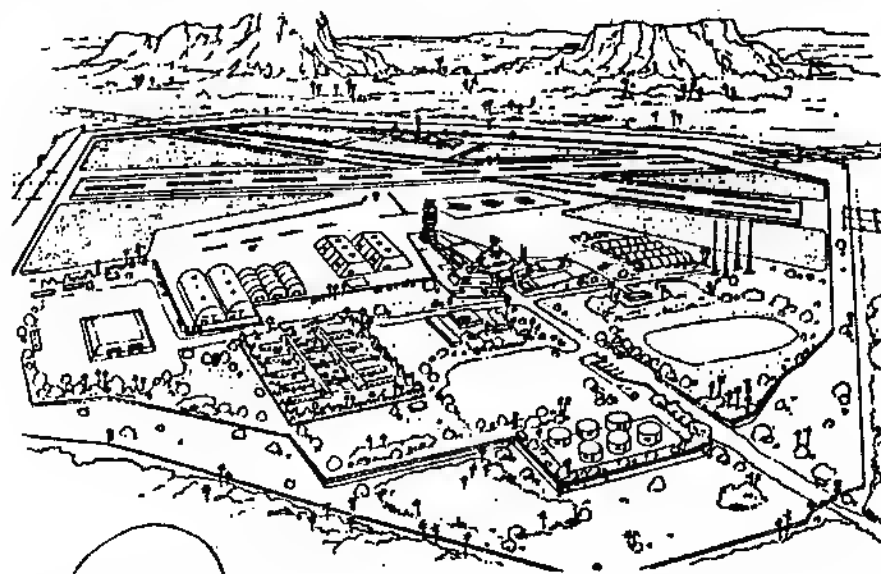


ZONOM
VILLAGE
(episode 16)



RAMO
TEMPLE
(episode 21)





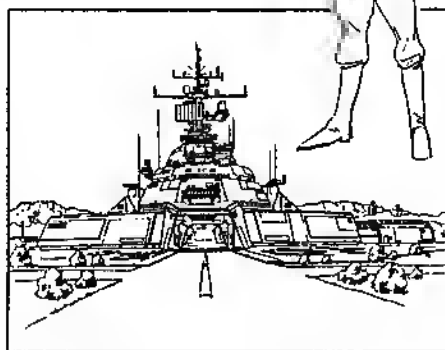
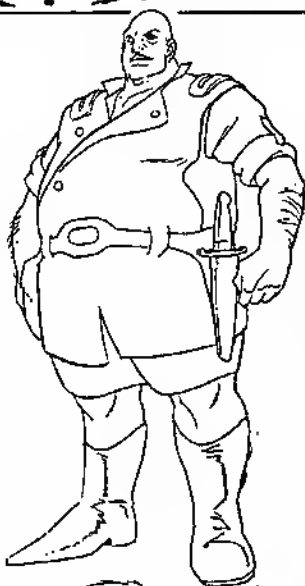
ASSEMBLE EX-10

One of several allied military bases in Kummen, Assemble EX-10 is a well-fortified, heavily armed unit that hires outside mercenaries to participate in the ongoing Bera conflict. It is heavily stocked with Armored Troopers, tanks, helicopters, and various other heavy weapons and is almost entirely self-sufficient.

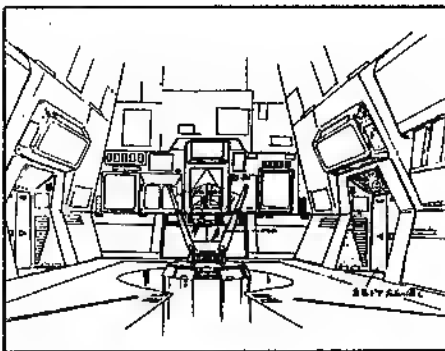


GON NER

General and official commander of Assemble EX-10, Gon Ner is an egotistical but fair-minded officer who is not above shady means to pursue his interests, which are usually financial in nature. This even includes a pact with the Merukian Army in its continuing pursuit of the lost Perfect Soldier.



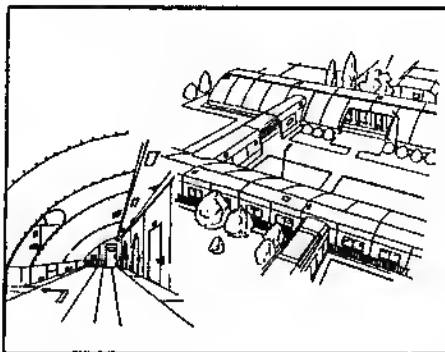
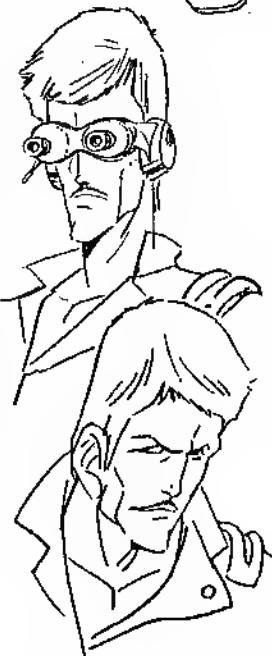
MAIN ENTRANCE



MEDICAL ROOM

KUAN YU

EX-10 Special Force Head Captain. Kuan Yu is another egotist, who treats his subordinates with cruelty. He is very suspicious of Chirico's motives and takes an almost instant dislike to him. Unfortunately, he ends up commanding Chirico's Special Squad and usually makes life more than a little difficult for him. Kuan Yu's code name is "Brown Hornet"



PASSAGES



PAUL POTARIA

A Kummen native, now mercenary EX-10 Special Force member. His knowledge of the country and the enemy keeps him in high regard among his comrades. A good natured man loyal to his friends, Potaria nevertheless participates in the fight against Kanjileman, with whom he was once close friends.



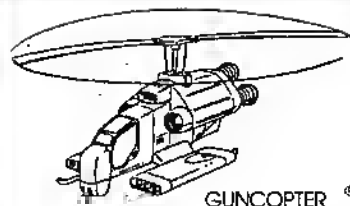
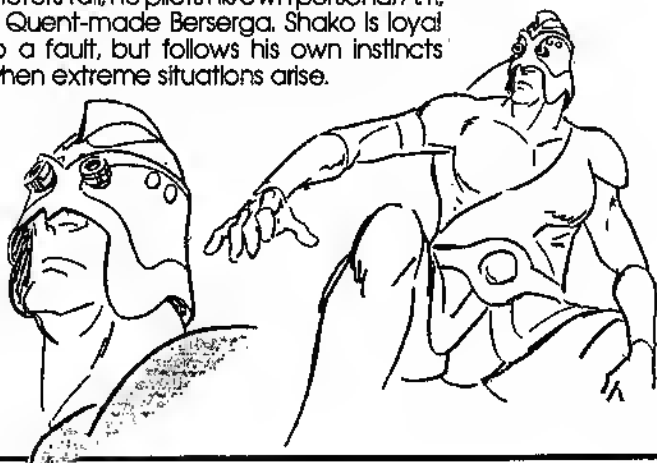
BULLY KIDERA

A mercenary EX-10 Special Force Member. Extremely gung-ho and rowdy, Kidera is often crass and ill-mannered but remains loyal to Chirico and the other members of the Special Squad under Kuan Yu. Like Potaria, he pilots a Diving Beetle and is often the first to plunge into a good fight.

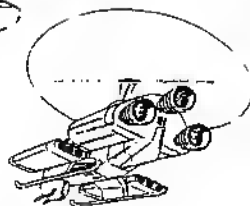


LOU SHAKO

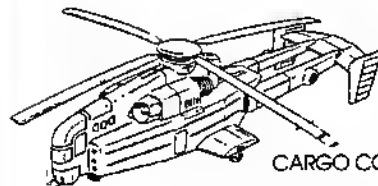
Although a native of Quent (Quentman), Shako also serves as a temporary EX-10 mercenary Special Force member under Kuan Yu and remains a political dark horse in Kummen. Just over two meters tall, he pilots his own personal A.T., a Quent-made Berserga. Shako is loyal to a fault, but follows his own instincts when extreme situations arise.



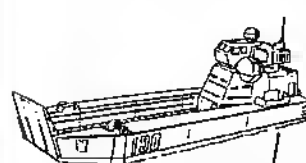
GUNCOPTER



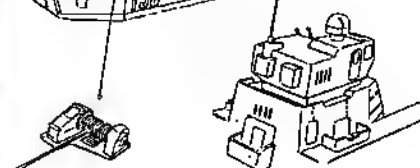
ASSEMBLE
EX-10 MECHA



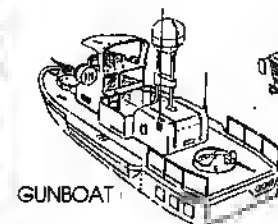
CARGO COPTER



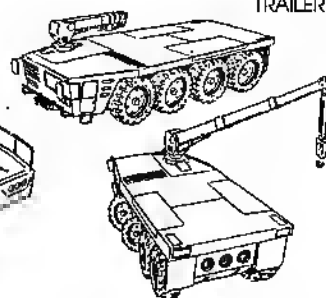
A.T. BARGE



A.T.
TRAILER



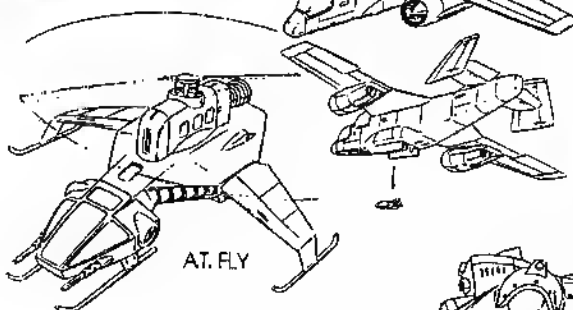
GUNBOAT



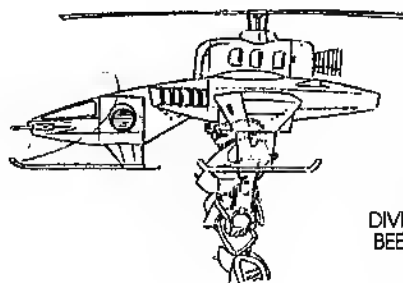
BOMBER



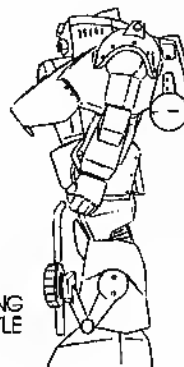
PERSONNEL
TRUCK



A.T. FLY

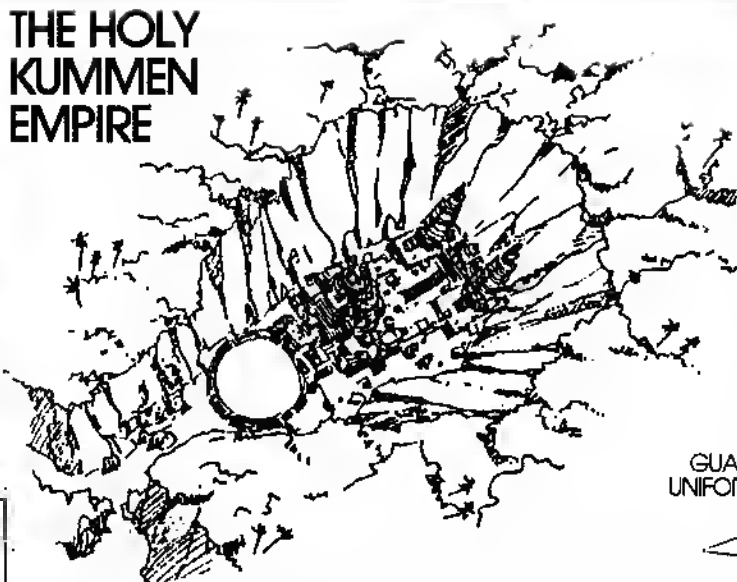


DIVING
BEETLE





THE HOLY KUMMEN EMPIRE



GUARD UNIFORM



COURTYARD



Lead by King Kanjielman III, the Holy Empire of Kummen has ruled as an independent nation for three generations and has formed a peaceful alliance with several of the villages in its jungles. When other governments set foot in Kummen with modern technology and ideas, however, conflict arose and the continent has been a theatre of guerilla warfare ever since. The Holy Palace is well-fortified within a deep valley rich in petroleum and jilrium deposits, making it the ultimate target for its opposers.

KING KANJIELMAN III

The third hereditary King of Kummen, Kanjielman now leads the fight to restore the land of his fathers to its ancient splendor. He is against all forms of technology, but allows his own people to use it against their foes simply because it is the only way to fight back effectively.

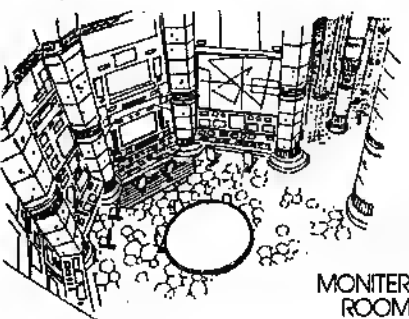
He is a wise leader, master strategist, and inspirational figure to his followers, to whom he teaches his seductive beliefs. He is also an expert at lance combat, a ritualistic form of fighting unique to Kummen and a direct throwback to the old beliefs.

Kanjielman teaches the ways of Ban Nu, the agricultural God of Kummen. The sanctity of the Kummen monarchy stems from the belief in this god and the policy for an agricultural province.

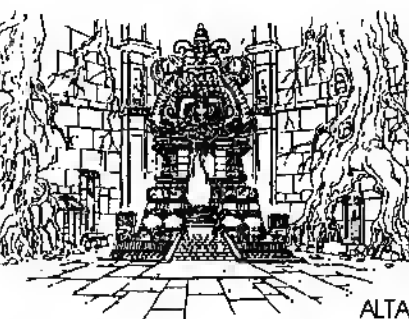
Despite his purity-of-mind philosophies, however, Kanjielman allows the Secret Society to take up residence with him, and he takes part in the training of Ypsilon for his role as the next generation of fighter.



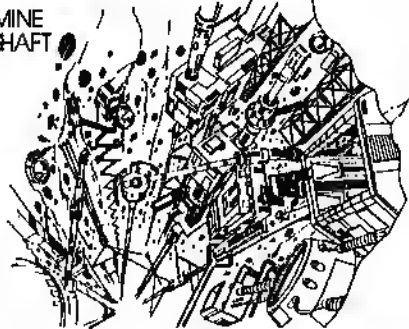
MONITOR ROOM



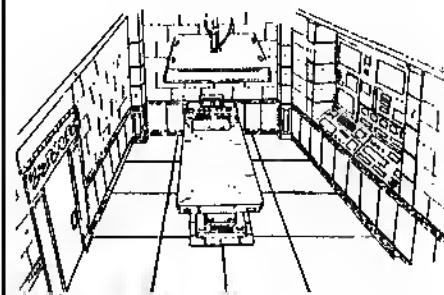
ALTAR



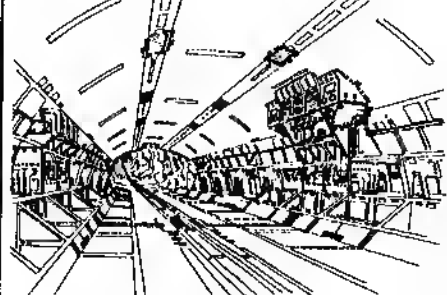
MINE SHAFT



MEDICAL ROOM



SHUTTLE DOCK



BERA GUERILLAS

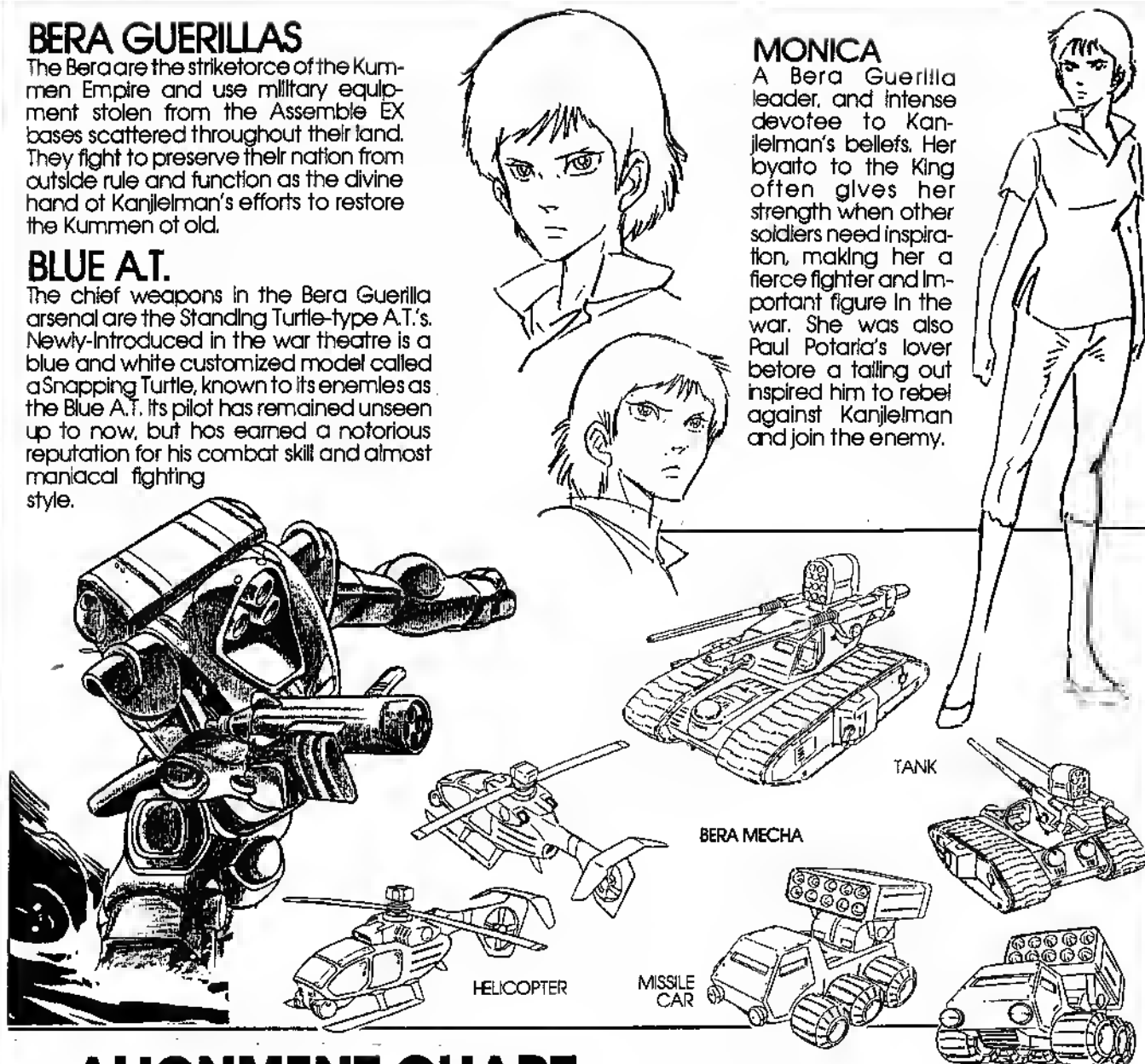
The Bera are the strikeforce of the Kummien Empire and use military equipment stolen from the Assemble EX bases scattered throughout their land. They fight to preserve their nation from outside rule and function as the divine hand of Kanjelman's efforts to restore the Kummien of old.

BLUE AT.

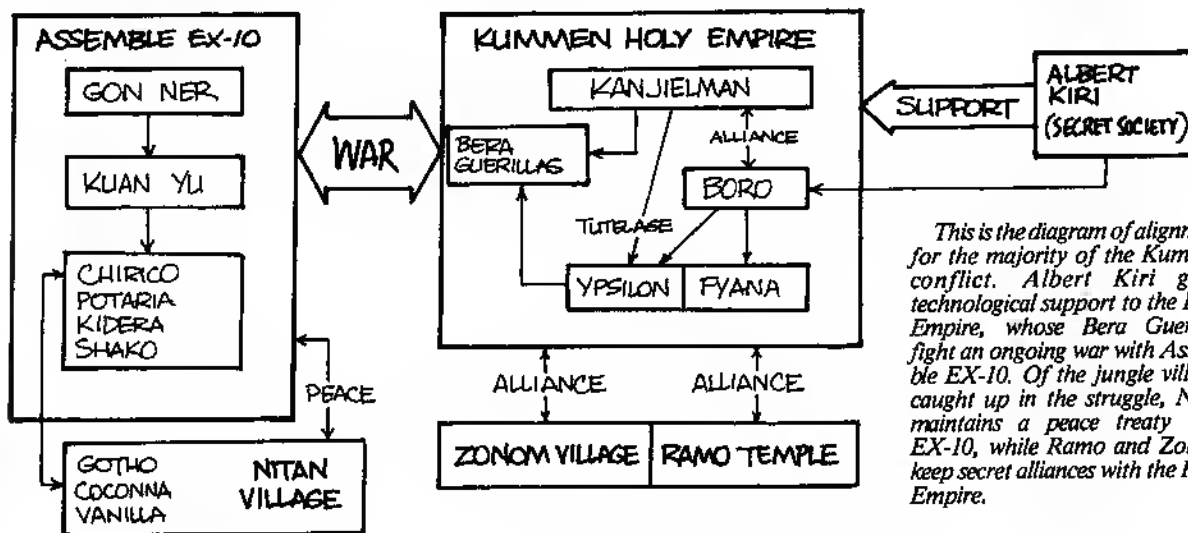
The chief weapons in the Bera Guerilla arsenal are the Standing Turtle-type A.T.'s. Newly-introduced in the war theatre is a blue and white customized model called a Snapping Turtle, known to its enemies as the Blue A.T. Its pilot has remained unseen up to now, but has earned a notorious reputation for his combat skill and almost maniacal fighting style.

MONICA

A Bera Guerilla leader, and intense devotee to Kanjelman's beliefs. Her byarto to the King often gives her strength when other soldiers need inspiration, making her a fierce fighter and important figure in the war. She was also Paul Potaria's lover before a falling out inspired him to rebel against Kanjelman and join the enemy.



ALIGNMENT CHART



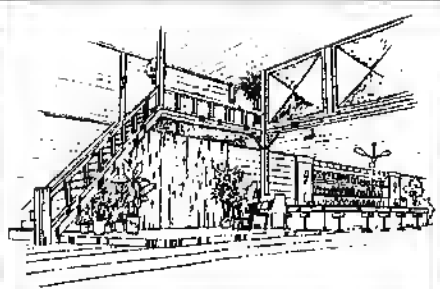
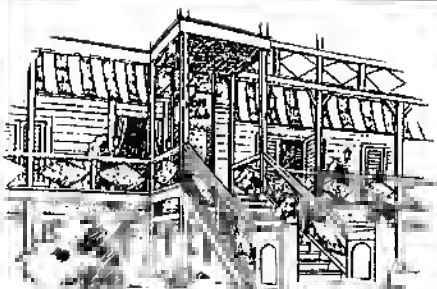
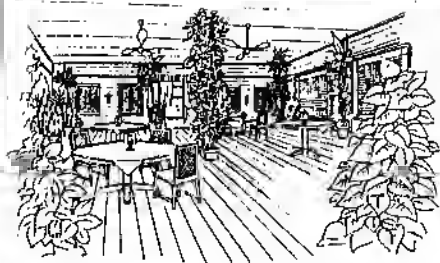
This is the diagram of alignment for the majority of the Kummien conflict. Albert Kiri gives technological support to the Holy Empire, whose Bera Guerillas fight an ongoing war with Assemble EX-10. Of the jungle villages caught up in the struggle, Nitán maintains a peace treaty with EX-10, while Ramo and Zonom keep secret alliances with the Holy Empire.

LOCALES

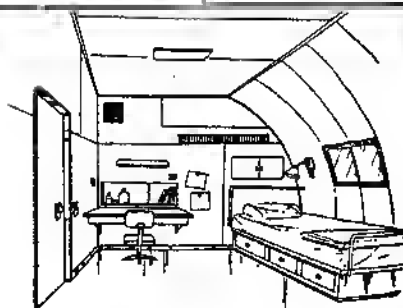
FANTAM CLUB
EXTERIORS
(episode 14)



FANTAM CLUB
INTERIORS
(episode 14)

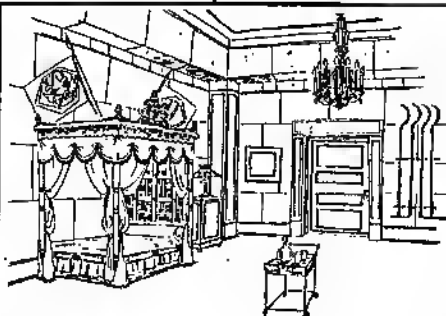


GOTHO'S
HOUSE
(episode 15)

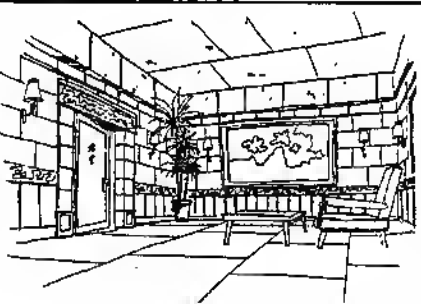
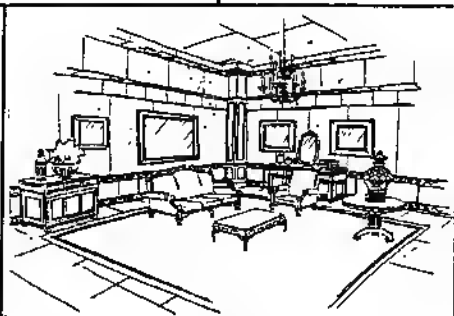


ASSEMBLE EX-10-
CHIRICO'S
QUARTERS-
(episode 16)

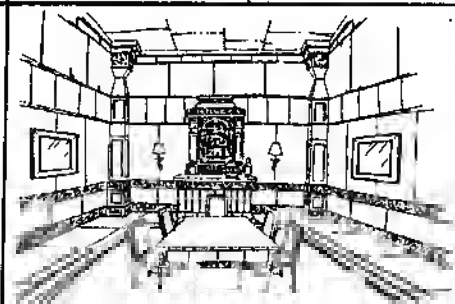
HOLY PALACE-
KANJIELMAN'S
CHAMBER
(episode 26)



HOLY PALACE-
FYANA'S
CHAMBER
(episode 17)

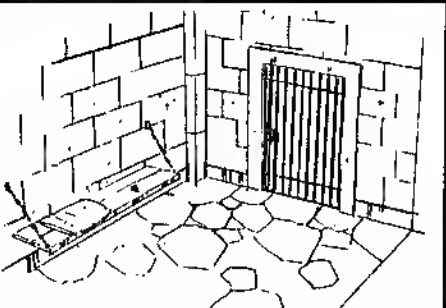


HOLY PALACE-
YPSILON'S
CHAMBER
(episode 24)

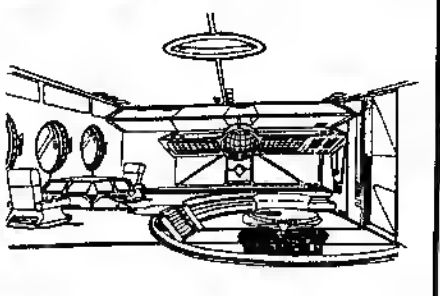


HOLY PALACE-
DINING
HALL
(episode 17)

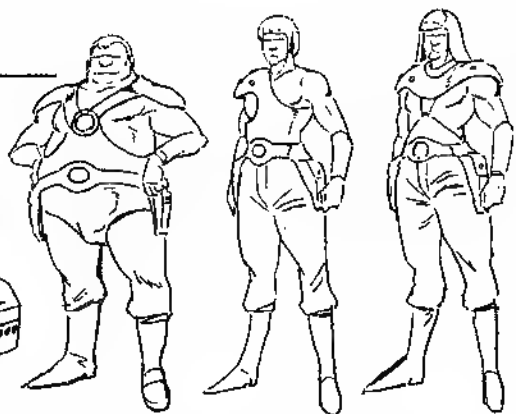
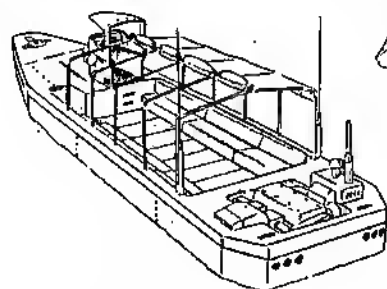
HOLY PALACE-
DUNGEON
(episode 17)



TELTAIN
LOUNGE
(episode 27)



EPISODE 14 ASSEMBLE EX-10



Stifling humidity surrounds a small merchant boat as it plies its meager way through a steamy jungle river somewhere in the heart of Kummen. It carries a party of callous mercenaries to a small, out-of-the-way village called Niton. Abruptly, the peace is shattered by gunfire erupting from the thickly-vegetated banks that rips into the flimsy boat and a few unprepared passengers. The rest scramble to defend themselves, and one in particular turns a flamethrower on his attackers, effectively ending the confrontation. That one is Chirico Cuvie.

Far away, in Battentain's Meruklan Base, he and Jan Paul Rochina observe a blinking indicator on a map of Kummen. The indicator denotes Chirico's position, and the two officers realize he is moving into both a self-governed land...and a state of war.

Boarding a truck in Niton, Chirico and his fellow mercenaries join a convoy down a jungle road and arrive at their destination: Assemble EX-10. They enter a line of other men joining the base and are shuttled through a series of physicals and given ID numbers. Chirico is now mercenary-for-hire Number 85.

After passing through the exams, Chirico's attention is called to a harsh announcement to the newcomers. Kuan Yu calls the crowd in a stifling briefing hall and introduces the commander of EX-10: Gon Ner.

Surveying the gathered fighters, Gon Ner gives a brief explanation of what they are to expect--brutal guerilla warfare. He calmly announces that of all the soldiers who enter the jungle every week, five percent do not come back--and that those gathered here would do well not to be in that five percent. Thus

adjourned, the unenthused mercenaries disband and a medtech calls for Kuan Yu's attention. There is an anomaly on the x-ray of Number 85.

Number 85, meanwhile, wanders one of the base's corridors and hears his name called.

"Chirico? Is that you?"

"Gotho!"

It is indeed Bruze Gotho, now slightly better dressed and looking like he hasn't tared too badly since the fall of Uodo. Thrilled to see his champion again, Gotho helps him locate his barracks, but as they pass through one of the many A.T. hangars, they are accosted by guards.

"Number 85! We have orders. Come with us!"

Gotho tries to intercede by questioning the men, but Chirico leaps into action and has them both on the floor before they can react. But as they march outside, Kuan Yu is waiting for them with an even bigger complement of troops. When Gotho asks what all of this is about, he and Chirico are mystified to learn that they have reason to believe Number 85 is a Meruklan Spy--there is a beacon implanted in his shoulder.

Shortly thereafter, Chirico is strapped to an upright examination table as a laser neatly removes the troublesome device. Kuan Yu orders the medtechs to leave, then gets rough with Chirico and demands to know the reason for this situation. But as enmity begins to grow between the two soldiers, in walks Gotho with Gon Ner, who eyes Kuan Yu disapprovingly.

In Gon Ner's office, Gotho stands by while Kuan Yu tries to convince his

C.O. of Chirico's malevolent intentions. When Gon Ner asks Chirico straight out why he is here, Chirico's answer is direct.

"I've seen the P.S. and I'm searching for her again."

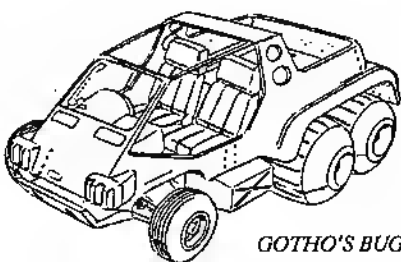
Kuan Yu is mystified.

"P.S.? What's that? I've never heard of it!"

Irritated at Kuan Yu's ignorance, Gon Ner explains the term as Perfect Soldier, of which only one is known to exist, and lets Chirico off, much to Kuan Yu's chagrin.

It becomes apparent in this and future such scenes that Gon Ner can be rather a tolerant commander despite the callous attitude displayed in his earlier announcement. Chirico seems to spark Gon Ner's interest with his non-nonsense nature and unabashed honesty about the P.S. It intrigues Gon Ner enough to pardon Chirico despite the beacon incident.

Kuan Yu, however, is not at all amiable, and when his judgement is overruled by his C.O., it begins almost a personal vendetta in him to humiliate Chirico as often as possible.



GOTHO'S BUGGY

That night, Gotho drives Chirico back to Niton Village to visit his new investment--a bar and lounge aptly named Fantam Club. After a reunion with Vanilla (acting bartender) and an ecstatic Coonna (who is more than pleased to learn that Chirico is here to stay), Chirico makes himself comfortable just as Kuan Yu and a group of soldiers enters. Hoping to avoid a confrontation, Gotho offers them free drinks, but Kuan Yu spots Chirico anyway and begins to bait him.

But from outside comes a tremendous explosion--Assemble EX-10 is being bombed from the surrounding jungle.

"Bera," Kuan Yu shouts to his men, "All of you to your stations!"

Chirico does something quite unique



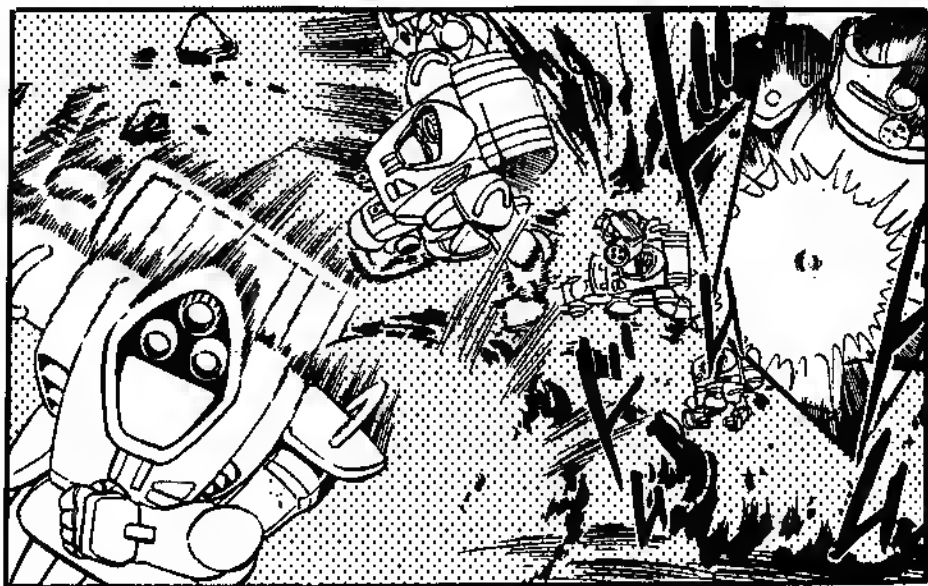
here considering his character--jumping up to join the military scramble, he glances back at a dour-looking Coconna, obviously depressed about "her man" plunging back into danger, and throws her a wink and snappy goodbye wave. This perks her up...it is the first indication of anything more than a casual attitude on his part, and underlines a real change in his disposition; a soldier once again, but also someone who has tasted life outside the war theater and is not completely lost in it.

Chirico joins the military scramble and boards a Marshydog to fly out by A.T. helicopter with Kuan Yu's unit of Diving Beetles. Spotting the enemy positions from the air, the A.T.'s are dropped into the jungle near the missile emplacements to move in for an ambush.

Kuan Yu orders Chirico to move in as point man and flush the enemy out while he waits with his squad in a swampy clearing. Accepting the order, Chirico enters the brush and attacks. The enemy is using Standing Turtles--the same variation of A.T. Chirico spotted during the fall of Uoodol As Chirico ponders this development, Kuan Yu holds his men back in a treacherous attempt to get Chirico out of his hair. The men protest, but Kuan Yu is firm in his order. What he doesn't realize is that other Turtles quietly surround his group led by a blue-colored squad leader...the Blue A.T.

The foliage around Kuan Yu's group explodes with gunfire. Reeling, the Diving Beetles hit back, and Chirico races back to their aid. The firefight is evenly matched but for the maniacal Blue A.T., which demolishes anything in its gunights.

Chirico decides to attack the Bera leader in his Marshydog, but is swiftly knocked to the ground with his opponent on top of him. But there is something in the way this new enemy fights that seems familiar--and when Chirico breaks the armlock, he leaps out of his Marshydog's cockpit and orders the other pilot to stop.



Incredibly, the Blue A.T. does stop, long enough to zoom in on Chirico--and then strikes! His Marshydog demolished, Chirico is hurled through the air and into a new mystery--despite its actions, could the Blue A.T. be piloted by his lost Fyana?

EPISODE 15 SUSPICION

An astonished Chirico lands in a patch of bushes and clammers to his feet as the Blue A.T. approaches. He draws his armored magnum for a last

stand--and the air around him explodes with gunfire. Kuan Yu and his troops have approached from behind him and now drive the Blue A.T. back into the jungle. When the danger has passed, Kuan Yu pops his hatch to berate Chirico for his ineptitude...but Chirico simply lets it pass.

It is a credit to Chirico's character that he does not return Kuan Yu's rough treatment, both as a soldier and a gentleman. Under the oppressive government of Red Shoulder Battalion, Chirico probably became accustomed to cruel treatment from his superiors, and learned the value of a placid attitude in the face of it. Likewise, a soldier would soon learn that a flippant or arrogant personage in the battlefield would eventually succumb to his own weaknesses when circumstances overcame his limitations.

Later, at EX-10, Gotho wanders in search of Chirico and inquires about him from the guards at Gon Ner's doorstep. Chirico is inside, but also in

big trouble. Kuan Yu takes Chirico to task for losing his A.T. in battle. When Gon Ner asks Chirico for an explanation, it is simply that he fought an enemy whom he believes to be the P.S. When the two officers discuss building up their defenses against the threat, Chirico offers that the best defense against the P.S. is simply to run away!

Chirico walks into the Fantam Club and greets Gotho, Vanilla and Coconna. He seats himself at a table as Coconna scoots off to sing him her newly-written love song. Chirico arranges to visit Gotho's house and

exercise an idea on his computer, and Coccona's song begins. It is a blues tune called "Another Rare Goodbye" and comes straight from her heart to Chirico.

He pays little attention to her, however, and as he tells Vanilla of his suspicion concerning the Blue A.T., a new customer enters the club: Bully Kidera. The burly man recognizes Chirico and berates him for his field actions. An argument flares up, but a lanky man at the bar calls for Kidera to cool off. Interestingly, Kidera backs off and heads for the bar to join the men in a drink.

Vanilla tells Chirico the lanky man's name: Paul Potarla, a veteran Kummen fighter. As Gotho mentions another local soldier, a Quentman, Chirico watches a mysterious, cloaked stranger at the bar leave his suitcase at Kidera's feet and walk out.

Suspecting the worst, Chirico sprints to the bar, grabs the suitcase, and is stopped by Bully Kidera.

"That's not yours," the larger man taunts, but Chirico knocks him away and heads for the door with the suitcase. Kidera tackles him again and grapples with Chirico as they smash through the door and down the front steps. Chirico hurls the case into the air as they crash to the ground--and it explodes!

His suspicions confirmed, Chirico shouts for two nearby guards to pursue the fleeing stranger, for he is one of the Bera Guerrillas, and very nearly destroyed them all. Kidera offers a gruff apology as Chirico dusts himself off and returns to the club.

Later that night, as Gotho drives Chirico to his house, he tells the Red Shoulder about their foes. The Bera fight for Kanjileman, the Holy King of Kummen, and follow him loyally. Now it appears a Perfect Soldier has joined their ranks, and Chirico needs Gotho's computer to program his A.T.'s Mission Disc with a new memory--one that will recognize the actions of a P.S. and confirm his suspicions.

Back at EX-10, Kuan Yu questions Gon Ner about his decision concerning Chirico and the day's events. Chirico will now be their guinea pig where the Blue A.T. is concerned--since he seems to know so much about the enemy's actions, he will be

the one to face it.

The next morning, a guard knocks at Gotho's door and tells him Chirico is to report to Kuan Yu at the airfield immediately. On his way out, Chirico grabs the newly-programmed Mission Disc.

Upon his arrival, Chirico is scolded for his tardiness by Kuan Yu and introduces himself to the other members of his task force--Bully Kidera, Paul Potarla, and the Quentman: Lou Shako. The soldiers climb into their respective A.T.'s and take off, heading toward a rendezvous with a supply barge which needs protection on its journey back to base.

Chirico is obviously impressed upon meeting Shako. The man's two-meter height and tremendous girth would impress anyone, but the manner of person Chirico is used to dealing with in battle could easily match such qualifications. In addition to his massive frame, however, Shako carries a certain air of aristocracy that adds that much more to his character. Quentmen are a rare breed known widely as venerable and stout fighters with whom it would be wise to remain friendly.

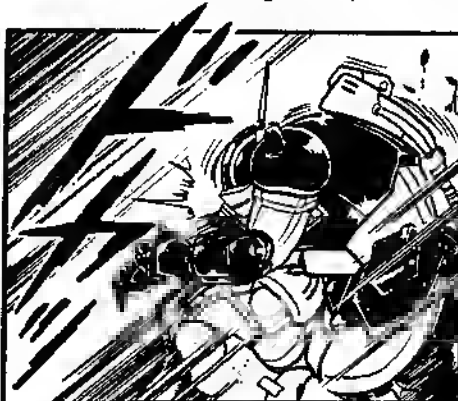
Kuan Yu and his task force land at the barge's dock slight, get a warning about Bera activity in the area, and move out back up the river to EX-10. The A.T.'s accompany the barge down the river, and Chirico engages in some friendly banter with Kidera. Kuan Yu orders them into silence, and the caravan continues.

Suddenly, Shako stops in his Berserga and looks toward the shoreline, intent on some activity he thinks he's spotted. Nothing moves, however, and the group continues on, unaware that the banks are crawling with Standing Turtles!

A short while later, the barge grounds itself in shallow water, and Kuan Yu orders Chirico to haul the boat's winch cable up to a cliff on the shore and anchor it on the rock. Swallowing his pride, Chirico obeys the order and moves up in his Marshydog. The cable secured, the barge starts to pull itself free with its winch, but danger strikes! Spotting a barrage of incoming missiles, Chirico barely has time to shout an alert before his A.T. is blasted from its perch on the cliff.

As Chirico recovers from the impact on shore, Standing Turtles

emerge from the brush and surround his companions in the water. Kuan Yu's men are the best of the bunch, however, and hit their attackers back hard as a firefight erupts.



Still on shore, Chirico whirls--and is set upon by none other than the Blue A.T. Grappling with the customized Turtle, Chirico slots the Mission Disc into his onboard computer and activates the program.

"Fyana," Chirico wonders, "could it really be you?"

Kuan Yu and the others take damage in the river, but manage to hold their own, and Chirico is knocked over the bank into the water. He rises and stares after the mysterious Blue A.T. as it turns and leaves. As the other Bera A.T.'s are dealt with, the battle ends...and Chirico is left to ponder new developments. His program confirms that the Blue A.T. is indeed piloted by a Perfect Soldier...but who?

EPISODE 16 ANNIHILATION

Shrouded in the jungle night, shadowy figures move stealthily through the foliage surrounding Assemble EX-10. Led by a dark-haired young woman, they incapacitate two roving guards and sneak inside the fence.

Sleeping soundly in his quarters, Chirico is abruptly awoken by a thunderous explosion and klaxons--the Bera Guerrillas have struck! Joining Potarla, Kidera, and the others, he helps fend off the attackers and control the riot.

The woman and a few remaining men are cornered at the outer fence and shot at by a pair of guards approaching on motorcycles. The woman skillfully blows away one

cyclist and leaps out of the second one's path, allowing him to crash through the fence.

Appropriating the bike, she roars off toward the jungle. The last obstacle in her way is Paul Potarla, who opens fire on her but stops when he recognizes who she is.

"Monical"

She, however, simply plows by him, landing a brutal kick as she speeds away to the safety of the dark trees.

As EX-10 guards extinguish the various blazes started by the guerilla attack, Gotho shows up and shares a lough with Chirico and Kidera. The Bera have botched another feeble attack and have only spoiled their sleep. Potarla does not share in the banter, though, and only thinks of the girl riding off into the Kummen night.

Later at the Fontam Club, Coconna finishes another chorus of her blues song and approaches Potarla and Kidera at their table.

"It gets hot on that stage," she says to Paul, "buy a girl a drink?"

Potarla callously turns her down and Kidera only has rude comments for her, so she joins Chirico, Vanilla, and Gotho at the bar.

"Those two don't know how to treat a lady," she complains, but Chirico is in contemplation. Vanilla has noticed a change in Potarla's bar attitude, and asks if anything odd has happened to him lately.

Later that night, the men are awakened by another klaxon—but this time Gon Ner and Kuan Yu have sounded it for a general announcement. A special task force has been chosen to track down the Bera escapee from the earlier raid, and will lead an attack on Zonom Village, where the guerilla leader is believed to have gone. Kuan Yu reads off the names:

"Lou Shakol Bully Kiderol" Interrupted by a gruff Kidera to answer how much he will pay for the job, Kuan Yu continues, "Chirico Cuviel Paul Potarla!"

At daybreak, the mission gets underway as the chosen task force follows a pair of bombers in A.T. helicopters. Zonom soon comes into view, a harmless-looking farming village, but the bombers unload their payloads on it anyway, clearing the way for A.T.'s and personnel carriers

to land and move in on foot.

As a thick pall of smoke hangs over the shattered village, guards round up the villagers and gather them in front of the village temple for an audience with Kuan Yu.

The task force leader calls up the village priest and demands that he reveal the guerilla leader. The priest refuses, claiming that Zonom is a peaceful village with no attachment to the Bera. Frustrated, Kidera fires at and demolishes a tractor in a vain show of force, and Kuan Yu orders his guards to scatter and find the guerilla leader.



ZONOM
HEAD PRIEST
OBORA



VILLAGERS

As Chirico scans the crowd from his Marshydog, the guards ransack the villagers' shacks and soon ferret out Monica—hiding in a haystack. She is brought to Kuan Yu and Potarla recognizes her instantly. Kuan Yu screeches at the priest again, demanding more answers about Zonom's ties with the Bera.

When the old man refuses to talk, Kuan Yu calls random members of the crowd front and center for a game that shocks everyone—the

Kummen equivalent of Russian Roulette! Kuan Yu empties five bullets from his six-shooter and tosses it down.

Under heavy scrutiny by the guards, the tense game progresses down to the last player in line—Monica. But when she takes the gun, Potarla shouts to her.

"STOP!"

Stepping forward in his Diving Beetle, he implores her to give herself up for questioning. Monica recognizes him, and when Kuan Yu demands to know of their relationship, Potarla tells him he and Monica were once lovers, but ended up on opposite sides of the war long ago.

Turning back to her, Paul begs her not to go through with the death game, but she bravely raises the revolver to her head and offers a bold soliloquy on fighting and dying for one's beliefs.

Chirico offers a short soliloquy on Monica's insistence to stand behind her beliefs. Idealism is never a basic element in a true soldier, but in her, Chirico recognizes the same loyalty and bravery inherent in all legendary fighters, and can respect her for her philosophies. One who would brave death for greater ideals is one to be respected indeed.

Having heard enough, Chirico steps forward in his A.T. and forces her to stop. The others demand to know the reason for his actions, and he orders Kidera to fire on a nearby temple. Shako protests the blasphemous actions, but then everything becomes clear—hiding inside the temple are Standing Turtles!

A firefight erupts in the clearing, and as more Turtles emerge from the jungle, the priest scatters his people to safety, Monica included. When the task force hits back, the Bera A.T.'s fall back into the jungle and Kuan Yu's men pursue them.

As Shako, Kidera and the others mop up their attackers, Chirico emerges from the jungle at a rocky hillside and is promptly fired at from above by none other than the Blue A.T. Thinking it is Fyana, Chirico hesitates to shoot back and ducks behind a rock, signalling to the other pilot with his Marshydog's lens flasher.

"Fyana," he signals, "It's Chirico! Why do you fight me?"

Amazingly, the Blue A.T. lowers its gun and stares at him. Encouraged, he climbs up the ledge facing it, steps out of his cockpit, and approaches on foot. The other pilot pops the hatch--

and turns out not to be Fyana after all.

"Who are you," Chirico blurts out.

The other pilot removes his helmet--he is a wiry young man with a mane of flowing white hair. He stares at the puzzled Marshydog pilot.

"You are Chirico!"

EPISODE 17 REUNION

"You're a Perfect Soldier," Chirico responds to the pilot of the Blue A.T. "Where is Fyana?"

"Forget about Proto-1! I'll never tell you where she is," the enemy shoots back.

"Then I'll find her myself!"

"Then I will kill you!"

Kuan Yu watches with suspicious interest from his Diving Beetle below under cover of the trees as Chirico sprints for his Marshydog. The two pilots power up--and their fight resumes!



Careening down the hillside, Chirico and the Blue A.T. exchange shots, and Chirico ends up the loser when his A.T. crashes to the ground a smoking wreck. Chirico climbs out to stare right down the barrel of his opponent's gun.

"I've got you," the P.S. taunts, "Proto-1 was wrong about you...you're not a fighter at all!" But as the brash young man centers him in his sights, Chirico neatly blows his lenses off with his armored magnum

and flees into the jungle. The Blue A.T. blankets the foliage with gunfire, but his opponent has escaped.

Seeing all of this, Kuan Yu returns to Zonom Village, which is now being levelled by EX-10 soldiers. When he orders his task force to prepare for flight back to the base, however, Potaria and Kidera protest that Chirico has not come back yet. Kuan Yu tells them to forget about the lost soldier and drows a gun on Paul when he powers up to go out to search.

"I'm in command here," Kuan Yu threatens, "and I say we're leaving!"

Later at the Fantam Club, Cocona is upset by the news of Chirico's disappearance, and after scolding Kidera, Shako, and Potaria at their table, she sings a determined verse of "Another Rare Goodbye" in the hope that it will guide her soldier back to her.

In another part of Kummen, a different type of combat takes place in the courtyard of the Holy Palace. As a reverent crowd watches, King Kanjelman engages in lance combat with Fantam Lady. The two bob, weave, and leap in a series of skillful thrusts at each other until Kanjelman disarms her and she collapses at his feet. The crowd is impressed, even the smug Boro, as she rises and congratulates Kanjelman on a good match. He complements her performance as well, and mentions another of his students--Ypsilon, who is now returning from the jungle with his Blue A.T.

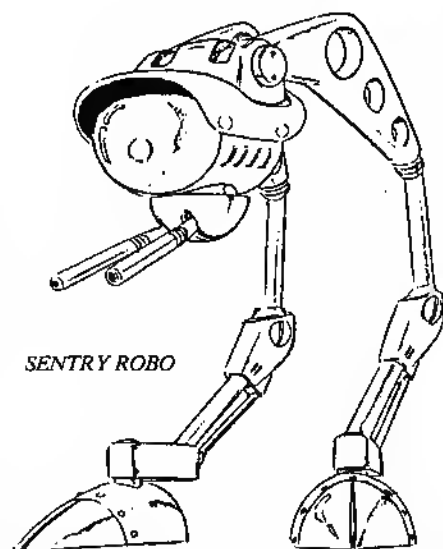
Upon his arrival, Ypsilon is summoned to Boro's altar chamber and gives a combat report, mentioning his encounter with the rogue Chirico.

"You're a Perfect Soldier," Boro responds, "Chirico has no chance against you!"

As they talk further on how to proceed, Proto-1 enters and summons Ypsilon to Kanjelman's dining hall for a feast and conference.

As Kanjelman dines with the two Perfect Soldiers, Chirico makes his way through the jungle near the palace. Suddenly, he is fired upon and pursued by robot sentries who surround him and cut off any route of escape.

Shortly thereafter, Chirico is marched across the courtyard of the Holy Palace and stopped beneath



the spectator balcony. Kanjelman is there, along with Boro, Ypsilon, and Fyana, with whom Chirico shares a longing look.

Boro introduces Chirico to Kanjelman as a Meruklan Soldier, one of their most notorious foes. The crowd roars for Chirico's head--except for Monica, who stares thoughtfully at him from their ranks. Kanjelman agrees he must be dealt with severely, and asks Ypsilon what he regards as just treatment. He, in turn, consults Proto-1, who suggests life imprisonment.

"No," Ypsilon decides, "I want to fight him!"

Ypsilon strides out onto the courtyard carrying a lance tipped with a razor-sharp scythe, and Chirico stares quizzically at the lance he is given. This will be the ritual combat, with which he is entirely unfamiliar. The Perfect Soldier taunts him and moves into a frenzy of intricate maneuvers, tripping up Chirico and knocking him around to the crowd's delight.

"There is no way for you to win," Ypsilon goads, "victory belongs to a Perfect Soldier! You fight like an amateur--how could you ever have been a Red Shoulder?"

Ypsilon grins widely with his Red Shoulder comment...he apparently knows of the nerve it will strike in his opponent. With this single taunt, he has re-opened the largest wound in Chirico's life, and Chirico's response is raw, unfettered fury now that the memory he fought to repress is suddenly tossed back at him by this unworthy enemy.

Chirico screams with rage and charges headlong at his grinning tormentor. Ypsilon sidesteps his attack, though, and runs the blunt end of his lance square into Chirico's chest, dropping him to the ground in searing pain. As Ypsilon prepares to land the death blow, a shout from Proto-1 halts him.

"Stop, Ypsilon!!"

All gathered give her a questioning look, and she regains her composure. "Let me finish it."

Stepping out into the courtyard, she takes Ypsilon's lance, gives Chirico a cold stare...and drives it straight into his shoulder! Chirico collapses as she hands Ypsilon the weapon.

"You didn't kill him."

"I didn't know the proper move."

She walks away as Ypsilon calls for guards to imprison the captive, and Chirico lies in a sea of pain and bewilderment.

Later that night, Fyana broods in her chamber, stands, and leaves, heading for the dungeon, watched by both Ypsilon and Monica hiding from view. Entering the prison, she is stopped by Chirico's guard and says she is here to take the prisoner to Kanjielman.

"But this is Ypsilon's prisoner. Only he can—" The guard is cut off when she draws a gun, forces him to open the cell, and clubs him. Rushing inside, she pulls a relieved Chirico from his cot.

"Hurry, you've got to get out of here," she says, but in his wounded condition, he has to slump against her in the doorway. The two exchange an emotional look and Fyana stares sadly at his wound. Apologizing, she tells him she did it to save his life, and that his coming here has made her very happy. Chirico asks her to escape with him, but she refuses, stating that they can never have peace together—wherever she goes, she will be found and made to fight again.

Much is said in the long, silent look Chirico and Fyana share. Questions are asked and answered in the eyes, and both respond with simple nods. Though her earlier actions puzzled Chirico, her present ones redeem her and restores the faith. Now it is as if nothing has changed since their parting

at Uoodo. Only their political positions have reversed.

Leading Chirico to the palace's A.T. hangar, Fyana is spotted by guards, who open fire on the fleeing prisoner. Chirico leaps into a Standing Turtle and fends them off, but when he implores Fyana to escape with him, she shakes her head and runs away despite his agonized cries for her to return.

Why Fyana does not escape with Chirico is based on many things. The revitalizing Jijirium shower is, of course, the main one, but she is also positive that she can never have peace so long as her superiors want to use her. A Perfect Soldier is, first and foremost, a fighting machine, and at this point, Fyana believes that is all she will ever be.

Chirico is forced to speed away as more Turtles come to life and open fire on him. The chase takes them out of the palace, through a river, and back into the jungle, by which time Chirico's A.T. has been demolished and he is on foot again.

Evading pursuing guards, he runs into Monica, who offers a motorboat for his escape.

"To return a favor," she explains. And as Chirico starts it up, she asks him to tell Potaria that she still loves him. Chirico nods and speeds away into the night, vowing to return for his lost Fyana.

EPISODE 18 TURNABOUT

A peaceful Kummen morning is broken by the sounds of EX-10 patrol helicopters that move into a landing in a clearing where guards train their guns on a reclining prisoner...Chirico Cuvie.

At the Fantam Club in Nitam Village, Coconna is woken by a ringing phone and receives the news she has been anticipating—her Chirico has been found! She dances ecstatically around Vanilla as he gets the details, then heads for the door.

"You're going dressed like that," he asks.

She looks down at her flimsy nightdress, giggles modestly, and bounds back up to her room as Vanilla rocks in silent laughter.



But a short time later, Gon Ner and Kuan Yu arrive on a scene devoid of humor...Chirico is flat on his back in a hospital bed presided over by Gotho, Vanilla, an EX-10 doctor, and a weeping Coconna. Kuan Yu orders Chirico made ready for interrogation about his involvement with the Bera Guerrillas, but the doctor claims Chirico is comatose from a jungle disease and could be out for a while. Gotho speaks firmly to Kuan Yu about his sadistic intentions, and the officer loses his temper and slaps the older man. Shocked by the military brutality, the others stare as Gon Ner decides to avoid further incident and leads Kuan Yu out of the room to let Chirico recover.



ASSEMBLE EX-10 PHYSICIAN

When they are safely gone, Chirico opens his eyes and sits up, as it is no longer necessary to maintain their charade. Gotho pays off and sends away the nervous doctor as he turns to Chirico for a discussion on their next move.

Relating his experiences of the previous day, he tells Gotho he has again found Fantam Lady, and Coconna glares.

In the courtyard of the Kummen Holy Palace, Kanjelman engages in lance combat with his other student: Ypsilon. Unlike his previous duel with Chirico, Ypsilon is outmatched by his teacher and can do little more than defend himself. Disarming Ypsilon with relative ease, Kanjelman warns him the main reason he beat Chirico was because of his superior training and his pride could bring about his failure.

As the King leaves, Proto-1 approaches and speaks to Ypsilon. She openly admits her actions to free Chirico and he eyes her dangerously. Warning her that the next time he sees Chirico will be the last for his enemy, Ypsilon strides away. Things are beginning to change between the two Perfect Soldiers.

ADVISORS



In the palace control room, Kanjelman receives important news from his executive staff. Their spies at EX-10 have discovered that the commanding officer is taking leave of the base for a meeting with Merukian officials. Realizing the implications, Kanjelman decides on an immediate, unprecedented attack on their enemies and Boro agrees...but this time different strategies must be called into play.

As Monica and other Bera Guerrillas start to mobilize off in the jungle, Gon Ner boards a cargo chopper and leaves Kuan Yu in command of Assemble EX-10 with orders not to disturb Chirico until his return. Watching from Chirico's room in the hospital, Gotho ponders the event and promises to dig up some information. Realizing Kuan Yu is now in charge, he suggests Chirico remain in bed until nightfall, at which time he will head for a chosen rendezvous point. Coconna

happily stays to care for him, and the others leave shortly before Kuan Yu walks by the room, deciding to keep a close watch on the "comatose" patient.

When Coconna announces her decision to stay and take care of the "comatose" Chirico, Vanilla eyes her angrily. He is clearly bothered by her doting over Chirico for a reason new to Vanilla's character. Not money this time, though she is a definite draw to his nightclub. This time, Vanilla is jealous.

At the decided time, Chirico sneaks out of the hospital and back to Gotho's house to intercept a phone call there. Gotho is on the line, and relates his findings. Gon Ner has indeed gone to speak with Merukians for new arrangements. By bringing the Merukian Army into Kummen, the entire Bera conflict will change, and, quite possible, so may Chirico's disposition.

But just as Gotho hangs up, Kuan Yu and a complement of bruisers burst in the door and flash a light on Chirico's face. He is theirs.

Later at the Fantam Club, Coconna babbles on about Chirico and an irritated Vanilla receives a phone call from Paul Potarla about Kuan Yu's discovery. The brutal commander and his men are working over a trussed-up Chirico in an office, but the young soldier maintains a placid front. One of Kuan Yu's men gets overzealous, and as Chirico nimbly kicks the brute across the room, there is a knock at the door.

Attempting to hide the scene, Kuan Yu opens it a crack to see Paul Potarla and Bully Kidera, who know full well Chirico is inside and demand entrance. As Kuan Yu hollers at them, a guard rushes up to the door with an alert--Bera Guerrillas have been spotted approaching the base! Kuan Yu's phone rings, and he grumpily answers it to issue scramble orders as Potarla enters with Kidera to untie a still-unruffled Chirico.

Hanging up, Kuan Yu throws an icy stare at his "prisoner," but Chirico remains cool and, far from revealing the commander's illegal actions, politely asks for an apology as his friends snort with laughter.

As Bera Guerrillas take up their positions in the jungle, Coconna moans about her uselessness in

Chirico's situation at the Fantam Club. Vanilla does his best to console her, and "accidentally" gives her a compliment. Her interest is sparked and she eyes him fondly, asking if he really meant it. He turns beet red...and is interrupted from answering by a sudden explosion outside!

Made jealous by Coconna's earlier treatment of him, Vanilla now grows even more in character by dropping the compliment, then showing embarrassment when confronted with it. The callous, devil-may-care Vanilla Vartla we watched in Uoodo is beginning to disappear under this less oppressive environment.

The two run to the door of the club and watch as missiles arc through the sky and come down to detonate in Nitam Village, uncomfortably close to the club.

More explosives strike Assemble EX-10 and the soldiers scramble to mobilize against the enemy. Kuan Yu and his task forces suit up in their respective A.T.'s and are borne into the night air by helicopter. Soaring out over the jungle, they spot the Bera launching position and move in for another A.T. drop.

But as they fan out and engage the enemy on the ground, Chirico



makes a puzzling observation--bullets fly left and right from the bush, but no enemy A.T.'s are in sight! Realizing the implications, Chirico shouts to the others and heads back for Nitán, where he believes the real attack will occur.

A skeptical Kuan Yu orders them to stand fast, but is forced to pull out when he is left behind as the target for the entire platoon of guerillas.

Arriving at the base, Chirico and the others see guards extinguish fires, and a pair of Diving Beetles who raise their weapons, demanding to know the reason for their separation from Kuan Yu. Actions override words, though, as Lou Shako's Berserger erupts from the jungle and knocks over the obstinate A.T.'s.

Climbing into an A.T. trailer truck, Shako shouts for the others to get aboard and ride out to Nitán Village, where even now more explosives strike the Fantam Club. And as Chirico's group approaches the carnage, he ponders the events...and wonders if this is only the prelude of warfare to come.

EPISODE 19 THE PLAN

Somewhere beyond the raging conflict in Kummen, an agreement has been reached, and Gon Ner drives down a Merukian airstrip enjoying the company of a new player in the game...Jan Paul Rochina, who is returning with him to Assemble EX-10. Boarding Gon Ner's helicopter, they receive a report of the Bera attack on Nitán and the soldiers' attempt to thwart it. They decide to move in despite the danger, and Rochina smiles at Gon Ner as they lift off.

"I'm looking forward to seeing Chirico Cuvle again."

In the jungles outside Nitán Village, Kuan Yu has rejoined another unit of Diving Beetles which continue to incinerate the foliage despite the mysterious absence of resistance. An A.T. pilot suggests they return to Nitán, and Kuan Yu screams at the men to stay put...but he, too, is bewildered by the events.

The real enemy, of course, has now entered Nitán and the Bera Standing Turtles make a shambles of the

already-burning buildings, including Fantam Club, where Vanilla tries desperately to put out the flames.

At that moment, Chirico's group arrives on the scene and leaps off the trailer truck to engage the Bera. As he and the others deal explosively with the guerilla invaders, Coonna drags Vanilla from the now-collapsing Fantam Club. They stand in shock as it trembles and falls to the ground, falling to notice a Turtle approach from behind and slight them in its cannon.



Suddenly, they turn to see it buckle and explode--blasted apart by a timely shot from Chirico in his Marshydog. They barely have time to take cover as he grapples with more Bera A.T.'s, and as the others help him deal with the attackers, Chirico swings his head to and fro looking for one enemy in particular.

"Where is he? Where's Ypsilon?"

The Perfect Soldier is nowhere to be found, however, since he is back at the Holy Palace as reports of the battle roll in to Kanjielman's control center. Ninety-eight percent of Nitán now lies in ruin, and almost every EX-10 A.T. is out in the jungle with no idea where the attackers are. The strategy has worked to perfection.

Deciding they have done sufficient damage, Kanjielman issues retreat orders and Ypsilon protests, insisting that now is the perfect time to move in with even more arms to destroy their enemy forever. Kanjielman snaps back with royal ferocity--

Ypsilon's suggestions have no place in his plans.

Disappointed, Ypsilon walks out to stand with Proto-1 on a palace balcony, complaining about not being allowed to fight. He is shocked to learn that she has no desire to participate in the carnage.

"But we're Perfect Soldiers," he protests. "It's our duty! How can you not wish to fight?"

"I do not fight," she cries, "because I am afraid! I'M AFRAID!"

At Nitán Village, Paul Potarla has just finished off another Standing Turtle and wonders if Monica is involved in this attack. She is indeed there, and presently targets his A.T. with a bazooka from her hiding place in the trees. Just as she is about to fire, however, a guerilla shouts the retreat alert, throwing off her aim and drawing attention to their position. Paul and the others notice the sudden pullout of Bera invaders and wonder why until Chirico looks up and spots a squadron of A.T. choppers soar overhead from Assemble EX-10.

"Kuan Yu!"

"That idiot," Kidera snorts, "He finally did something right for a change!"

The morning sun rises over the smoldering remains of Nitán Village as the survivors patch themselves up. Vanilla broods over the loss as Coonna dresses his wounds, and Gotho approaches from the ruins of Fantam Club. Their dream is over. Nevertheless, Gotho remains light-

hearted, as new events have come to pass that will hold great importance for all their futures.

At Assemble EX-10, Chirico is escorted to Gon Ner's office. Kuan Yu is there, and when Gon Ner asks Chirico of the previous evening's battle details, he gives the Red Shoulder a pardon. When Kuan Yu protests, Gon Ner explodes.

"You fell right into their trap! Chirico's decision may have saved your life--if you hadn't acted when you did, I'd kick you off my base right now!"

Ever the gentleman, Chirico speaks on behalf of Kuan Yu, offering that the enemy's strategy was well-planned and not easy to decipher. A dejected Kuan Yu is dismissed to await further orders, and Gon Ner calls Chirico's attention to another visitor seated across the room...Rochina.

Chirico is very surprised, but the Merukian Officer flashes him a disarming grin.

"Sit down," Rochina says, "the three of us are different, but we share a common purpose--the P.S."

Back at the Holy Palace, the P.S. in question undergoes a psychic exam, but all readings prove she is in good health.

"But she said she was afraid," Ypsilon protests to Boro. "How can that be healthy?"

"Her mind is not like yours," Boro retorts, "she was tainted by the first thing she ever saw--Chirico Cuvlei!"

Obviously, Fyana's standing in the Secret Society has now changed considerably. Though created with the full Perfect Soldier programming and instinctive combat ability, her waking vision of Chirico has indeed derailed the process from the crux. Slowly, to be sure, but in the end, completely. She now has no desire to fight, which violates her entire purpose, and until reuniting with Chirico and re-aligning her emotions, she is useless as a soldier.

In Gon Ner's office, Rochina stares out the window and explains to his two new allies the exact nature of their objective. A Perfect Soldier is the result of the Merukians' attempt to create a new type of weapon--a genetically-created human with entirely artificial nerves, muscles, and brain functions. At a certain

point in their development, all brain activities are stopped and they are "programmed" for combat, meaning when they reach maturity twenty days later, fighting is a completely natural, subconscious ability. In but one month, a P.S. is virtually indistinguishable from normal humans in all respects.

Rochina is alarmed to learn of the second P.S., Ypsilon, and agrees that since Chirico has had such intimate encounters with him on the battlefield, he is the only one who can fight back.

Later, in the A.T. hangar, Diving Beetles are repaired as Chirico works on his Marshydog with Gotho and discusses the meeting with Rochina...dramatic events are now underway.

At Gotho's house across the base, Coonna drinks with Vanilla, and the brooding former-bartender finally speaks his mind. The loss of Nitan Village and Fantam Club has made him ponder the futility of his life, and he now wants to dedicate himself to a greater purpose...he wants to join the army at Assemble EX-10 and strike back!

Vanilla's decision brings the growth he and his companions have experienced since leaving the shadow of Uoodo to its full realization. Formerly of an environment where apathy was the norm, they have created something in which they took great pride. When it is taken away by the ongoing war, Vanilla in particular feels the greatest personal loss...but rather than wallow in sorrow, as he might have done in his former personality, he is compelled to take action and restore the pride he had built in himself with Fantam Club.

Assemble EX-10, meanwhile, is now the sight of a mass mobilization. Rochina concludes his dealings with Gon Ner and launches in a helicopter to join the exodus while Coonna tries in vain to change Vanilla's mind as he drives, determined, to the base. They arrive just as a new mission gets underway, in which Chirico and a selected task force will enter the heart of Kanjielman's territory.

Vanilla reaches the dock just as Chirico and the others have boarded a motorboat and set off.

"Chirico," he shouts desperately, "I want to go with you! Please, I want

to help!"

Chirico can only give him a sympathetic look as the boat pulls away. Coonna sadly watches the men leave...and croons "Another Rare Goodbye" for the final time.

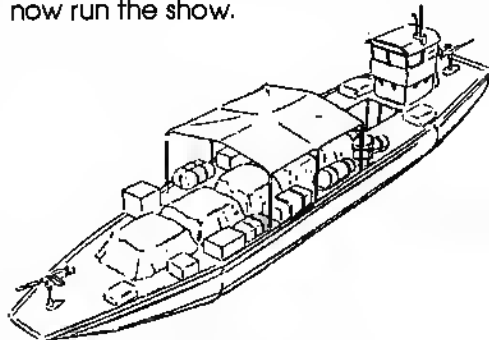


EPISODE 20 FYANA

A recap of events in Uoodo, centering on Chirico's encounters with Fantam Lady and the growing relationship between them.

EPISODE 21 UPSTREAM

At Assemble EX-10 prior to his departure with the task force, Chirico was called into Gon Ner's office for official orders. Rochina and Kuan Yu were also present as the base commander outlined the mission: the task force will attempt to infiltrate the Holy Palace of Kanjielman himself and capture the Perfect Soldier to get her out in time for an all-out attack led by Rochina from the air. This was a mission that would require specialists and a special commander...Kuan Yu was more than a little upset to learn that Rochina requested Chirico's leadership on this crucial task. Kuan Yu protested but was overridden. Chirico has more practical experience with the P.S. to draw on. The Merukians now run the show.



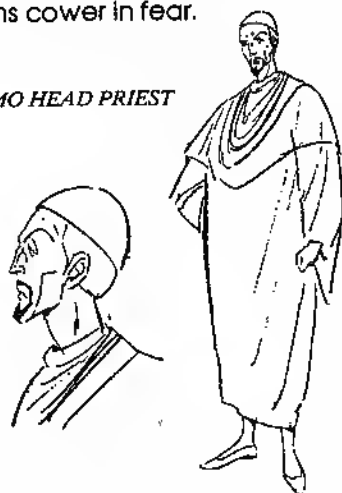
Now, the motorboat cruises quietly away from EX-10 toward the palace. Chirico commands Kuan Yu, Shako, Kidera, Potarla, and a garrison of



most likely reason for this course of action is a hope on Chirico's part that Kuan Yu will find nothing and return to the mission in humility.

Kuan Yu greedily grabs his command back, instantly ordering the men to their A.T.'s. Docking at a stone-carved landing at the base of a huge staircase leading up to Ramo itself, the task force marches in as citizens cower in fear.

RAMO HEAD PRIEST



The head priest stands before the intruders as Kuan Yu strides toward him in the lead and paps his Diving Beetle's hatch for audience. He announces they are here to investigate Bera presence, but the priest denies any involvement with them.

"Then you should have nothing to hide," Kuan Yu threatens, and orders the guards to scatter and search the temple. The men rush inside as the A.T. pilots keep watch. Soldiers from Kanjelman's army do indeed watch cautiously from in hiding...but Kuan Yu's men regroup and have found nothing of a suspicious nature.

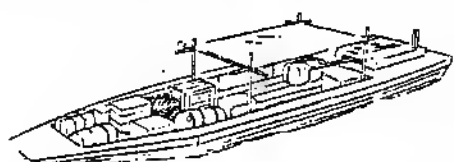
During the course of the temple search, Chirico makes a deadly observation--behind a flapping curtain is the obvious silhouette of an enemy A.T. When an EX-10 guard approaches the curtain, a citizen of Ramo claims that it is a confessional and pleads with the man not to desecrate it. When the guard ignores the peasant's plea, however, Chirico orders him to move on and not cause an incident. Though on the surface Chirico's actions appear insubordinate, it is much more likely that he wants nothing but to move on with their mission and be forgotten once the citizens are left in safety.

There remains only a single shack to check, and Kuan Yu does this

EX-10 guards. As they pass the last sign of civilization--the ashen skeletons of Niton houses, Potarla voices some concern over the difficulty of their task--he knows full well what it will require to reach the Holy Palace in secrecy, and it will be no easy job.

An alert interrupts Paul's discussion with the others as a helicopter approaches--a Bera helicopter. They duck under tarps and behind crates as it flies overhead, and Kidera sprints for the stern cannon when it has safely passed their position. Chirico stops him before he can fire, warning him not to attract undue attention. A lost helicopter would cause a stir--and that is exactly what they have been ordered to avoid.

Kidera complains about the lack of action but accepts Chirico's judgement. Moments later, another approacher is spotted--this time a small peasant boat moving quietly toward them from the direction they head. On the basis that it may be a Bera smuggling boat, Kuan Yu insists they stop it, but Chirico disagrees for the same reasons he gave Kidera. Kuan Yu manages to convince him that mere jungle peasants will not cause a disruption if that is indeed all they are, and hauls the rickety vessel to haul up beside their motorboat.



Kuan Yu directs the guards to search the boat, but all it yields are poultry and fruit. He orders the terrified passengers on their way and wanders to stern to watch their departure. He waits until they are a safe distance away...and to everyone's horror, opens fire on it with the cannon! Before they can stop Kuan Yu, however, the bullets rip through the other boat's hull--and a tremendous explosion rips across the water. It was indeed a Bera weapons runner, loaded with concealed ex-

plosives.

Potarla chews out Kuan Yu for his presumptive actions, but Chirico intervenes. The former squad leader is brash in his assumptions, but unfortunately happened to be right this time. Potarla cools off as Kuan Yu goats.

At the Holy Palace, Fyana watches quietly as Bera Guerrillas move about below her balcony repairing and servicing their arsenal. Ypsilon approaches her.

"Chirico will come back for you," he says condescendingly. "and when he does, I will kill him!"

As Boro approaches and summons Ypsilon to a strategy meeting, he eyes Proto-1 disapprovingly and walks away with his new fighter, leaving her to her brooding.

Kanjelman leads the strategic conference. Noting that the Merukians are undoubtedly now moving against them, new troop movements are discussed. Ypsilon insists on heavy A.T. strikes, but Boro orders him silent. Kanjelman's decision is to let the enemy come to them...and it is not Ypsilon's place to argue.

As Chirico's boat rounds a bank, a gigantic structure looms into view on the shore ahead--Ramo Temple. Potarla explains its neutral status, as it is a highly religious colony. Chirico doubts that it bears closer investigation, but Kuan Yu protests heavily, insisting that Bera Guerrillas are everywhere, and everything warrants investigation, although their mission does not call for it. Chirico argues with the stubborn Kuan Yu and finally gives up.

"I never wanted to lead," Chirico says. "If it's so important to you to terrorize every village you see, you take over!"

Exactly why Chirico gives up control of the mission is a mystery. As a soldier, he is defying his superiors' orders by relinquishing his command, but Kuan Yu's obnoxiousness is entirely more effective at the moment. The

personally. He finds only sacramental wine barrels, but puts on a threatening show for the priest anyway, unaware that one of the Bera soldiers hides only a few feet away.

Relieved, the priest watches as the EX-10 soldiers march back toward their ship. Kuan Yu stands at the head of the stairs as they descend to reboard the boat, then makes an intriguing observation: the other boats moored at the dock next to theirs look disturbingly similar to the weapons smuggler he blasted earlier!

Ordering the guards to check one of them over, Kuan Yu has them untie it and shove it out into the water. Breathless, all assembled watch as Kuan Yu takes aim...and the tiny vessel explodes under fire, its deadly cargo erupting spectacularly in the water!

"It's a trick!"

The illusion shattered, Bera soldiers emerge from their hiding places all over the temple, releasing a barrage of firepower on Kuan Yu's task force. The A.T.'s charge back up the stairs through scattering citizens to tackle the enemy head on. Standing Turtles emerge from the temple, and Chirico and the rest fight their way inside as Kuan Yu remains at the stairway to defend the motorboat.

He fails miserably, however, when a guided missile wafts over his head and demolishes both the boat and its complement of guards. Angrily, Kuan Yu targets the firer on the roof of the temple and shoots. The huge structure shudders and its roof begins to collapse on the fighters inside. Chirico and the others scramble out in time to watch their enemy fall.

Citizens pull themselves out of the wreckage of the now-destroyed Ramo Temple as an EX-10 helicopter silently approaches. On the temple courtyard, Kuan Yu berates Chirico for his lack of perception where Bera hideaways are concerned. Chirico argues that this was not even the intent of their mission and that Kuan Yu's actions have now lost them their transport. Turning to a remaining guard, Kuan Yu orders him to radio EX-10 for new arrangements, but Chirico

intervenes—he's already done it.

The approaching chopper descends smoothly across the yard from them, and the pilot bounds nimbly out, sprinting toward a waiting Chirico. It is Vanilla.



Vanilla gives Chirico a tremendous bear hug, then lapses into military jargon, telling him he was sent by Gon Ner. Interrupting, Chirico tells his enthusiastic friend of the change in command. Sympathetic, Vanilla jogs over to Kuan Yu and babbles on about Gon Ner's new arrangements.

The others watch, snickering, as Vanilla deluges the precocious Kuan Yu with army blather, but Chirico walks sullenly away through the ruins of the temple, lamenting that everyone he meets becomes embroiled in his ongoing war...and he wonders if it will ever cease.

EPISODE 22 DEFECTION

As a squadron of cargo choppers and A.T. helicopters load up to leave Assemble EX-10 for Kuan Yu's position at Ramo, Gon Ner radios Rochina to discuss new arrangements now that their task force has blown its cover. To avoid the obvious route of continuing upriver, they will now be carried via helicopter across land to Crescent River, where they will continue through water to a beach point at which they can disembark and continue on. The new route works on paper...but the chance of being spotted while airborne could easily spoil their mission.

Gotho sips coffee at his house with Coonna, wondering how their

friends will fare. They take comfort in Vanilla and Chirico being together to help each other...and Coonna has begun to respect Vanilla's new actions. In fact, she has begun to respect him in many new ways!

Vanilla, meanwhile, circles the wreckage of Ramo Temple while Kuan Yu, Chirico, and the others hook up to the newly-arrived A.T. helicopters. He takes the lead position in the air as they launch...but they are watched the entire time by a stray Ramo citizen who radios his observations straight to Kanjiel's Palace.

There, Bera A.T.'s are prepared for upcoming battle and Bero approaches Ypsilon as he fine-tunes his Snapping Turtle. He tells the Perfect Soldier of the exodus from Ramo. Chirico is on his way, and it has been decided that his group must be dealt with before they can reach the palace. It will require an extraordinary fighter to stop them, for this is a crucial operation. Proto-1 is no longer trustworthy...but Ypsilon is more than willing to take part in his enemy's destruction.

As the EX-10 task force soars low over the jungle, Potaria argues with Kuan Yu over the futility of their mission now that their cover has been blown. He knows the Holy Empire will send a retaliatory force their way, and Chirico speculates that the Blue A.T. will probably lead the strike.

Ahead of them, Vanilla flies on as point man and attracts the attention of unwelcome eyes--Bera Soldiers in a patrol of tanks and missile cars, who unleash some heavy firepower on him. Vanilla cries out in alarm and manages to dodge their fire, but when he yells that he is pulling out, Kuan Yu orders him to hold position--he must distract the Bera long enough for the task force to deal with them on the ground. Vanilla gulps in fear, but skillfully weaves his chopper around the missiles as the others move into an A.T. drop.

They are quick to engage the enemy vehicles and do a fair job of trashing them...but not before a Bera Soldier gets off an alert to the palace.

A short while later, the EX-10 A.T.'s are flown to Crescent River, where they are deposited into an armored barge and get underway again.

complete with gunboat escorts. Chirico and the others watch as Vanilla leads the helicopter squadron back to base, then return their attention to the task at hand. They are now relatively safe with their heavy armed escort, but Chirico is positive Ypsilon will come. All that can be done now is to wait.

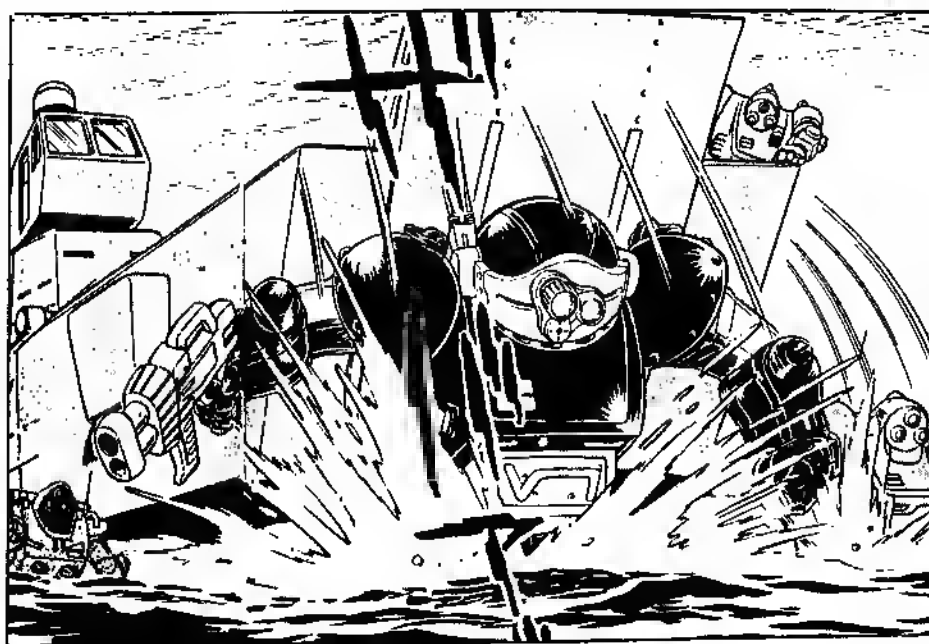
As Chirico considers the possibility of another battle with Ypsilon, he eyes Kidera, Potaria, and Shako. There is something special about these three... a chemistry that has created a bond between the mercenaries and this straight-off-the-line soldier. Almost without trying, the four of them have become friends, and Chirico is saddened by the thought of one of them dying in his own personal war.

Meanwhile, at the Holy Palace, Ypsilon visits Fantam Lady in her chamber and tells her she will no longer be trusted to fight. He has been selected to lead the attack on Chirico's group. She is quiet about it all, but after Boro knocks and summons Ypsilon away, she wishes Chirico luck in what he will face.

Ypsilon has been called to a new strategy meeting, where Boro outlines the plan of attack...to hide A.T.'s in the water near the mouth of Crescent River where they believe their enemies will disembark. Ypsilon is upset to learn of Boro's intentions to carry Proto-1 with him in his personal helicopter, and says so after the meeting in the altar chamber.

Rather than explain his reasoning, however, Boro smugly flicks a switch that douses the flame well in the altar--and activates a hidden video screen. Appearing on the monitor is none but their supreme commander himself: Albert Kiril Kiri explains their plan regarding Proto-1; she will not fight because of her love for Chirico. To wipe his image permanently from her mind, she will be made to watch his destruction from Boro's helicopter. Ypsilon now understands, and is reminded of the important role he will play--not only to preserve their operation in Kummen, but to irrevocably destroy the man that prevents their female super-soldier from fighting.

Later, Kanjielman watches as the Bera strikeforce launches its choppers from the Holy Palace. Fantam Lady indeed rides with Boro, and Yp-



silon observes her from his Snapping Turtle.

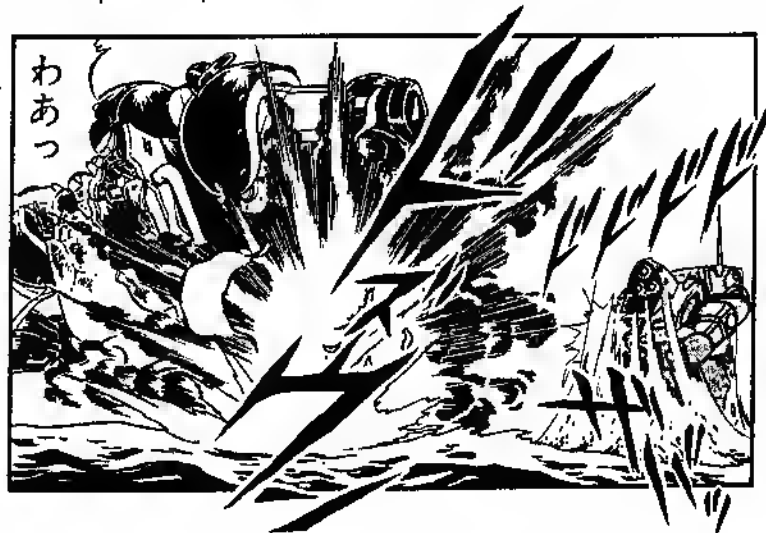
"Soon Chirico will be dead," he thinks to her, "and you will be mine forever!"

In Crescent River, Chirico relaxes with Kidera and the others as their convoy moves quietly on. The Bera still have not made a move, but Chirico knows the Blue A.T. must appear soon...it is the nature of a P.S. to attack at the best opportunity. His discussion with the other men is interrupted by an alert from Kuan Yu--shoreline approaches, and the time has come to power up their A.T.'s.

tackle the enemy. The anticipated assault has come, but Chirico glances sharply around to discover the Blue A.T. is nowhere in sight!

As Shako, Potaria, and the others continue their battle with the Turtles, a shadow moving overhead catches Chirico's attention. It is Boro's helicopter--and Chirico zooms in to spot his beloved Fyana in the back seat! She sees him as well, and just as she realizes what she has been brought to witness, Ypsilon emerges from the water in his Blue A.T.!

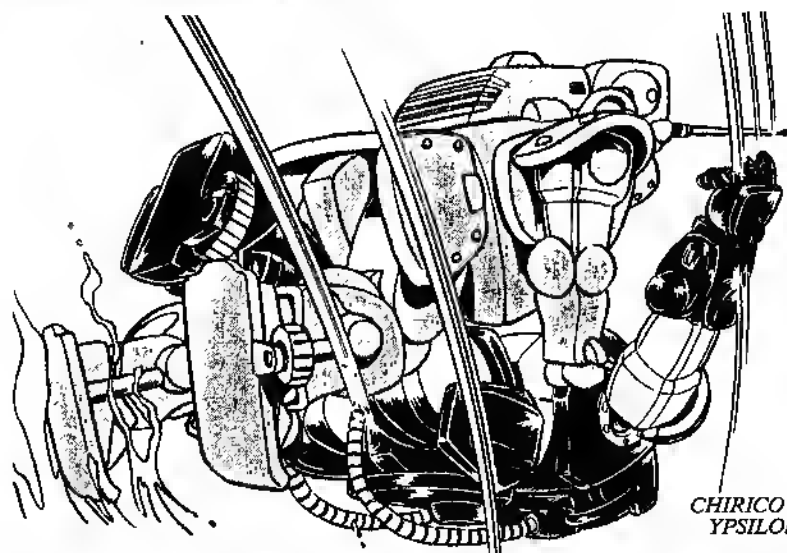
Blowing away a gunboat to herald his arrival, he ducks back



Suddenly, one of the gunboats rocks violently and is overturned--and Standing Turtles surface from beneath it with guns blazing! The barge takes hits, and the A.T.'s are quick to dive into the water and

under to circle around to Chirico's position. All is silent...

And the situation explodes when Ypsilon erupts into Chirico's view! The two unleash dozens of rounds on each other and Crescent River


CHIRICO VS.
YPSILON!


She turns to see the damage she has done just as the pilot helps Boro out of the mangled cockpit. He spots her, but she is on her feet and running to the safety of the trees before he can stop her. He calls her by the Proto-1 name, but it does no good. She is gone.



While Kuan Yu and his men continue their tussle with the Bera A.T.'s, Ypsilon scans the river bottom and

spots the silent hulk of Chirico's Marshydog. But Chirico is no longer in it...for he now swims stealthily up behind the Blue A.T. and blasts its air tanks with his pistol at point blank range.

Ypsilon whips around, but Chirico has hidden himself back in the rocks. His air supply rapidly dwindling, Ypsilon is forced to abandon any pursuit and head for the surface. Their flight is over.

A cargo chopper descends to land at the Holy Palace and out steps Boro--bandaged and limping from the crash, but angrier than ever. He proceeds to Kanjelman's monitor room and gets a report from the battlezone. The Bera Turtles have pulled back and regrouped...but Ypsilon is missing and there is no sign of Proto-1. Kanjelman berates Boro's actions; Chirico is probably still alive, and the Perfect Soldiers have become impossible to depend on. He now sees no alternative but to order his soldiers to kill Proto-1 on sight. Boro's plans have failed, and absolute measures must now be taken.

Hiding from Bera helicopter pilots, Kuan Yu's task force prepares for its next move. Chirico has salvaged his Marshydog and repairs it to embark on a search for their objective, the P.S. Kuan Yu protests, seeing no way for her to have survived the crash, but Chirico believes she is still alive--and boldly strides away in his now-operational A.T.

Furious, Kuan Yu orders the others to power up and catch him. They climb into their A.T.'s, but do not move--not even Shako, whom Kuan Yu thought would obey any order. Promising to deal with them later, he revs up his own Diving Beetle to go after the deserter--but the others surround him until he cools off. This is, after all, their assigned mission, and Kuan Yu grumpily agrees to follow Chirico again.

A peal of thunder echoes far away, approaching with a rainstorm and stirring a sleeping Fyana on a rocky ledge set into a huge mountainside. Abruptly, a new sound makes her leap to her feet--the footsteps of an approaching A.T. She slips into the stone ravines running up the sides of the mountain and climbs around a slab of rock. Looming before her there is the Blue

becomes the sight of perhaps the most devastating confrontation thus far. Chirico and Ypsilon lay down gunfire in massive quantities, but abruptly, the Red Shoulder's Marshydog is struck by the Perfect Soldier's Snapping Turtle!

Fyana turns away as Chirico struggles to defend himself, but Boro twists her head around and forces her to watch the death of her loved one. As Chirico takes more hits from Ypsilon, his A.T. begins to spring leaks, but his companions can do little for him, as the other Bera A.T.'s now surround them with heavy fire.

As Chirico begins to sink, Fyana decides she can stand no more--and lunges for the chopper controls! Knocking the pilot out of the way, she sends the vehicle into a violent spin and dives for the water, straight for Ypsilon's A.T. Chirico is now helpless, and just as Ypsilon prepares to fire the final salvo, his A.T. is slammed into by the wildly careening helicopter! His shot goes astray and he and Chirico watch in mutual horror as the chopper slides across the water, slams into the bank, and explodes!

His heart stabbed by the vision, Chirico freezes as his Marshydog slowly sinks into the water. His Fyana is gone...and with her went all his hopes.

EPISODE 23 COMPLICATIONS

Boro's helicopter lies in a twisted, smoking wreck...but lying a few yards away, thrown clear of the crash, sits a very much alive Fyana!

A.T.I. Shocked, she turns--and Ypsilon stands behind her! Comfortingly, he slips his arms around her, promising to take her back with him away from all harm. But she wants no part of him--and backs away to pull a gun and prove the point.

He is surprised, but a sly smile creeps across his face.

"I don't think you can do it."

But she can, and he realizes this as she raises the weapon to her own head--when the rock next to them explodes in a hail of gunfire. Proto-1 is knocked to the ground, and Ypsilon glances sharply up to the ledge above.

Looming there is a Standing Turtle, the pilot of which announces that he has standing orders to kill Proto-1. Fyana backs away as Ypsilon argues for her protection and jumps into his own A.T. when more Bera machines open fire on her. Ypsilon lunges his Snapping Turtle between the Bera A.T.'s and his beloved Proto-1 and takes hits meant for her. But when the Bera Turtles loom into his gunsights, he freezes--he cannot shoot back!

Ypsilon's reluctance to fire on his own allies is a direct result of his programming and tutelage. It is extremely disconcerting, then, for him to witness Fyana's rebellion and aggressiveness toward him, which is absolutely unacceptable. His quandary must be further exasperated by the fact that his own men are not at all hesitant to blast away at him. In many ways, Proto-2 is as naive as a child and, mainly because of Boro's tutelage, does not understand the shades between black and white.

Boro is immediately informed of this, and tells Kanjelman he believes Ypsilon remains loyal to them. Kanjelman is reserved...the full truth remains to be seen.

The mountain on which this drama is played out looms into Chirico's view--as do the explosions at its peak. Certain it is the sight of his objective, Chirico shouts to the others and moves out. They follow and Kuan Yu trembles in anger. He is rapidly losing control of the situation.

In the ravines, Fyana flees from her attackers as Ypsilon stands resolutely in front of them, blocking them

from pursuing her. They unleash their full firepower on him, and his Blue A.T. is hurled backward into the rocks--mangled beyond any hope of repair.

Ahead, Fyana rounds another bend to stare straight down the barrel of another Standing Turtle's rifle. After a moment of frozen silence, the Bera A.T. buckles and explodes...and she turns to see perhaps the most welcome sight she could hope for. Chirico and his companions have arrived!

She slips away to hide as the new arrivals go to work, blowing away the Standing Turtles one by one and finally coming upon Ypsilon, pinned in the wreckage of his now-useless Snapping Turtle. The P.S. glares at Chirico as he kneels down in his Marshydog and pries the Blue A.T. apart for Ypsilon to scramble free.

Ypsilon jumps to the ground and pulls his gun, but Chirico simply stares down at him from his A.T. and orders the brash P.S. to escape while he can. Chirico's attention is turned away from Ypsilon by an alert from Bully Kidera. Kuan Yu is gone...and so is the P.S.!

Now that Fyana is back in his company, Chirico apparently sees little need for Ypsilon's destruction. Also familiarized with his opponent's arrogant attitude, Chirico probably realizes that by being forced to return to his superiors in shame and failure will cause a much deeper wound in Ypsilon than simply dying in battle against a heavier-armed enemy.

In fact, Kuan Yu now pursues and fires on Fyana from his Diving Beetle. Gloating, he backs her up to the rim of a rock ledge...but before he can



step forward to end the chase forever, she slips and falls—landing unconscious on another ledge below. Kuan Yu smiles wickedly. Fate has dropped the objective right into his hands!

The storm now blankets Kummen with rain as Boro gets reports of the battle from Bera survivors. Proto-1 has escaped again, but Ypsilon is no longer a threat. Kanjelman still threatens Boro about these events...the Perfect Soldiers have ultimately proven a liability, and he now has little confidence in their continued participation in his conflict.

As Chirico searches the rain-drenched mountainside for Kuan Yu and Fyana, they rest in the jungle below. Fyana is now handcuffed and watches Kuan Yu fiddle with his transceiver near the banks of a rushing river. Struggling against the storm's interference, Kuan Yu finally raises Gon Ner at EX-10 and explains the situation. Chirico and the others are lost, but he has single-handedly captured the P.S. and will wait here for helicopter pickup.

But as Gon Ner signs off, another figure peers at Kuan Yu from around the leg of his Diving Beetle, left standing nearby: Chirico! Kuan Yu sneers at Fyana and pulls a knife, intending to rough her up a bit himself before turning her over to his superiors. This is quite enough for Chirico, and he leaps to attack!

Wrestling with Kuan Yu, the man that has made life miserable ever since his arrival in this land, Chirico snatches the keys to Fyana's handcuffs and tosses them to her. She struggles to free herself as the two men continue to trade blows, and before long, Kuan Yu has pinned Chirico to the ground on the very bank of the river. Chirico twists his body, dumping both of them into the choppy water.

The Red Shoulder breaks to the surface and grabs hold of the muddy bank, and the EX-10 Platoon Commander is swept away down the river, sputtering and cursing. Suddenly drained, Chirico loses his grip—but Fyana's hand lunges out to catch him before he can slip into the torrent. They are alone at last...free of their tormentors.

Later, the rainstorm dissipates,

and EX-10 soldiers arrive at Kuan Yu's reported position. His empty A.T. stands in the brush...but no task force leader or prisoner thereof is in sight.

Somewhere down the river, a bandaged Chirico slowly opens his eyes to see a sparkling vision—the deep brown eyes of his lovely Fyana, who now cares for him as he recovers from all his battles. They talk of their searches for each other before meeting again here in Kummen, and decide they must never again be parted. She speaks about how they can go somewhere far away from the war...and her words lull him slowly back to sleep.

As the Kummen afternoon draws to a close, EX-10 helicopters scan the jungle for any sign of Kuan Yu. Chirico awakens again, but Fyana is no longer with him. He wanders to the river where she washes his tunic in the cool water. She turns to see him and cries in alarm when he loses his strength and topples. Grabbing him up, she shares a long look with him.

"You look beautiful," he says.

"You look awful," she giggles.

Later, they dine on their dwindling C-rations and decide that before much longer, they will have to leave here. It is unsafe for a P.S. in Kummen. But Chirico wants one thing before moving on: to settle with Kanjelman and Boro once and for all.

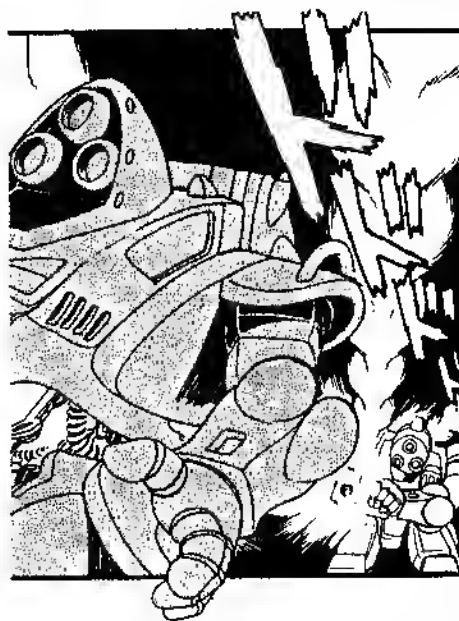
Fyana pleads with him to give up the fight and not risk his life before they can begin their lives together. But he refuses.

"I have to do this for myself. And for us."

EPISODE 24 THE CROSSING

Seated on the arm of Chirico's Marshydog, Fyana travels with him as he marches down a river canyon, heading in the direction of the Holy Palace. But they do not go unobserved—Standing Turtles watch them from above, shrouded in the trees overlooking the canyon. A feeling of vague uneasiness grows in her and she suddenly shouts an alarm. Missiles arc through the air toward them and Chirico dodges as they hit.

They explode against the canyon wall and Fyana ducks for cover, for now the Bera A.T.'s descend on them by the dozens! She watches from behind a boulder as Chirico goes to work, adeptly fending off his attackers one by one. But the numbers against him are overwhelming, and his A.T. is knocked backward by a hail of gunfire. He manages to stand, but the Marshydog's leg is now seriously damaged. He is frozen as the Turtles begin to surround him—and are suddenly blasted apart by new participants in the battle: Potaria, Kidera, and Shako, who now rocket down the canyon wall to Chirico's rescue!



The Bera pilots are unprepared for the assault, and swiftly fall to the now-reunited EX-10 Task Force.

When the danger has passed, the others group around Chirico and question him about Kuan Yu. Chirico tries to tell them of the tussle and the separation, but they are reserved in their acceptance...until Fyana steps out of her hiding place and tells them how it happened.

"He had no choice," she explains. "It was one or the other."

Chirico introduces her—she is the P.S. after which they have been sent. At first the others are apprehensive about her and the thought of an alliance, so as Chirico repairs his A.T., he tells them the story from the beginning—his discovery on RID, the Merukian Perfect Soldier Project, and all the subsequent problems.

Potaria is nervous at the prospect

of going after Kanjielman on their own, but an agreement is reached, and their new plan gets underway.

On the balcony overlooking the courtyard of the Holy Palace, Kanjielman watches as Bera vehicles begin to move out on the grounds below. His executive officers approach and discuss their new strategies, which amount to the complete mobilization of the Bera forces--to raze the land and route the enemy in preparation for the inevitable coming of the Merukian Army.

The Merukian arrival in Kummen has given Kanjielman much to think about in his ongoing struggle. The Bera, supplied with weapons by the Secret Society, were almost evenly-matched against the EX bases...but now that a major army has joined the enemy, Kanjielman is forced to accept that he must meet technology with equal technology to preserve his land. Obviously, considerable inner turmoil is caused by his anti-modernized beliefs.

Elsewhere in the palace, Ypsilon has returned and partakes in a jilium shower while Boro outlines the situation for him. Proto-1 is no longer theirs...she has joined the enemy and now must be treated as one.

Deciding on their basic plan of attack, Chirico and the others prepare to suit up and move out--but one dissenter stops and makes his thoughts heard: Lou Shako. What they plan to do involves desertion from Assemble EX-10 and rogue attacks on the Kummen hierarchy...and he cannot bring himself to breach his mercenary contract. Thus, he ends his path here.

Sadly, Chirico and the others march away, leaving Shako behind to turn back. But dangerous work lies before them, and they must turn their attention to the job at hand.

A short time later, the sound of a helicopter fills the canyon...and the group looks up to see an EX-10 heavy-class chopper approach and state its intentions to return them to the base. Chirico exchanges a nervous look with Fyana as Kidera waves the vehicle in. But, surprisingly, Kidera then raises his gun and blows away its undercarriage. Panicking, the pilot is ordered to return to EX-10, and turns the shuddering helicopter

to soar away from the canyon as fast as his rotors will carry him.

Chirico watches it disappear and throws Kidera a puzzled glance.

"That'll keep them off our backs," the burly man laughs.

At the monitor station of Assemble EX-10, Gon Ner receives the chopper pilot's report of these events and fumes in frustration. The P.S. retrieval mission is becoming more troublesome than he likes.

Informing Jan Paul Rochina of the situation, Gon Ner is told to keep Chirico under observation--as long as the P.S. is with the task force, they cannot be endangered. Rochina also gives Gon Ner the go-ahead to implement their attack plans and prepare for a decisive sweep by the Merukians that will end the Kummen conflict once and for all.

Newly returned from his latest patrol, Vanilla relaxes with Gotho and Coonna in their house. They are anxious to hear news of Chirico's exploits, but Coonna does her best to cover up her concern when Fantam Lady's name is invoked. Before Vanilla can finish his story, however, his name booms over the base P.A. and he rises to begin his next mission. He waves a snappy farewell...but stops at the door when Coonna calls his name.

"Please be careful," she pleads, not without feeling.

Downtrodden by her new lack of purpose, Coonna is slightly more vulnerable by this time. She has grown more respect for military men in general and Vanilla in particular as she watches the vague charm and carefree lilt in his personality resurface. She still dotes on Chirico and asks after him, but has grown closer to Vanilla at the same time as she realizes he's not that bad after all.

A sly grin crosses his face as he cups her chin and leans forward...then giggles happily to himself and gives her a chummy smile.

"I'll be back."

In the river canyon, Fyana again rides with Chirico as he leads Kidera and Potaria down the river toward their first objective. Suddenly, she speaks a warning to Chirico, and he stops as she intently surveys the water.

"What is it," Kidera hazards.

"She senses something," Chirico explains, "a P.S. can do that."

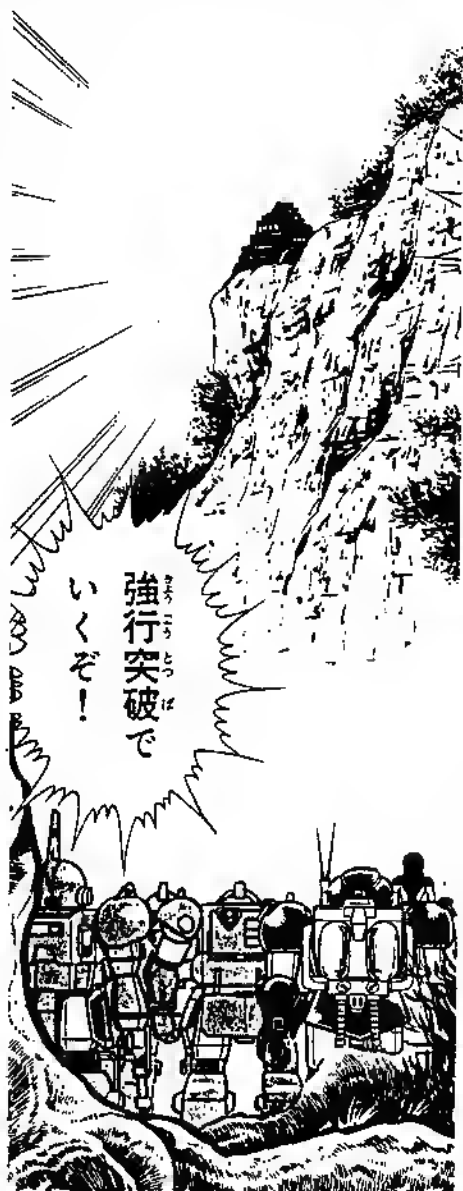
Fyana shouts as Standing Turtles emerge from the water.

"There!"

She dives for cover again as Chirico and the others open up on the Bera A.T.s...but rather than engage in a firefight, the Turtles simply submerge again. There is a pause, and Fyana shouts again.

"THERE!"

Indeed, the Turtles burst from the water again, and this time Chirico's group is ready to blast them to pieces. Now, the Bera A.T.s swarm toward them from beneath the water--but Fyana can anticipate where each of them will surface and efficiently directs Chirico,



Kidera, and Potarla to blast them before they do. Thus, the enemy is quickly dealt with, and Kidera pops his hatch to admire their work.

"The P.S. isn't a bad thing to have with you in a fight," he laughs. Then, as he watches her slide back onto Chirico's A.T., adds, "not bad looking, either!"

At the Holy Palace, Boro and Ypsilon discuss strategies with Albert Kiri via the altar monitor. Kiri cautions them not to further endanger the alliance with Kanjelman...then expresses confidence in Ypsilon's continued service. Kiri is sending him a new A.T. hot off the line—one that will promise to be unstoppable in what he will face.

Marching onward through the canyon, Chirico's group sights its first objective in the war with Kanjelman—the main armory base of the Bera Army. Fyana jumps off Chirico's Marshydog and tells them to wait; she will sneak into the base to obtain her own A.T. before they strike. Chirico looks worriedly at her.

"Will you be all right?"

"I'm a P.S."

With that, she bounds up the cliffside, and Chirico watches as she disappears from sight into a cavern above them. Creeping stealthily through tunnels to the A.T. hangar, Fyana overhears a controller receive radio orders from the Holy Palace. Hearing of the mass mobilization and this base's importance in it, she leaps into a Standing Turtle and cuts loose with gunfire, throwing the hangar into chaos!

As she engages other Bera A.T.'s that hurriedly power up to stop her, Chirico explodes into the base with his companions, wiping out any resistance in sight. A single Standing Turtle appears in a doorway and Kidera opens fire on it—but it moves with sufficient grace and speed to evade his every shot. Chirico stops him and the Turtle halts in front of them, opening up to reveal Fyana herself. The attack is over. Kidera is impressed.

Back outside, Potarla is skeptical at Fyana's report of Kanjelman's actions...total subjugation is out of character for the Holy King. But before they can discuss the matter further, the sound of another helicopter splits the air. Chirico

recognizes the vehicle as Vanilla's, and Vanilla radios EX-10 excitedly that he has found the task force along with the P.S.

His cheer is flattened, however, when he is simply ordered to return to base, and he sadly turns his chopper around to do so. Chirico watches him go. Many eyes are now on them...so their next move must be the decisive one.

EPISODE 25 INFILTRATION

Battered, injured, exhausted, a lost Kuan Yu trudges through the deep jungle hoping against all odds to find his way back to Assemble EX-10. Just as he finishes tussling with a vicious snake, however, he stumbles onto a group of Bera Guerrillas and becomes the object of an armed pursuit. Careening down a hillside, he takes cover behind a rock, bullets flying all around him. But suddenly, the pursuers are set upon and wiped out by a silent observer—Lou Shako in his Bersergal!

Sobbing in pain and exhaustion, Kuan Yu thanks Shako, who demands to know of Kuan Yu's experiences. Before passing out completely, Kuan Yu sums up the events of the past few hours very simply—The Perfect Soldier has escaped.

Sometime later, Kuan Yu awakens to a brutish but welcome sight—Gon Ner standing over his bedside at EX-10. Kuan Yu asks to gain revenge on Chirico and the others, but Gon Ner no longer cares about them. Other plans are now underway that will end the Kummen conflict forever.

Out in the mountains surrounding the Holy Palace, Potarla watches from his Diving Beetle as caravans of Bera weaponry move about the jungle preparing for what indeed looks like a major onslaught. He returns to Chirico and Kidera, who are using Fyana's knowledge of the palace layout to find a likely entrance. Potarla tells them of the Bera activity, and Chirico gets an idea that will gain them even better odds.

As Kanjelman observes the activity surrounding the palace, Monica and a group of commandos fend off a minor enemy attack in the jungle nearby. Her men express some resentment about the situa-

tion, but she stands firm in her support of the king.

Elsewhere, a caravan of Bera weapons trucks has passed Chirico's position behind a roadside tree, and he brazenly steps out just in time to fire at the last vehicle—an A.T. trailer loaded with Standing Turtles. One of its drivers jumps into a Turtle but is quickly trounced by Kidera in his Diving Beetle. The truck and the A.T.'s are theirs.

But coming up behind the trailer is one more Bera vehicle—a missile car. Its gunner spots the two Diving Beetles in the road ahead and signals the driver to stop. Before either of them can react, though, the enemy A.T.'s are demolished by a pair of their own Turtles emerging from the brush. That settled, the missile car roars away, leading the A.T. trailer back toward the Holy Palace...but Chirico now drives the larger vehicle, and his group rides with him, all in stolen Tortoises.

At the palace grounds, a dispirited Monica walks through a host of injured or recuperating guerrillas who further lament the situation and their insignificant place in it. The continuous lack of faith from the soldiers upsets Monica deeply, and she runs away into the palace, calling for her king.

Kanjelman, meanwhile, has gotten another tiring report from his servants concerning the military movements and adjourns to his chambers. As he walks the palace halls, he is spotted by Monica, who moves to follow him. But as he walks farther on, he overhears a tense conversation between Boro and Ypsilon. The young P.S. cannot accept that Proto-1 has joined the enemy, and he wants nothing but to hunt down Chirico, but Boro insists that he stay in the palace and wait for his new Armored Trooper. Frustrated, Ypsilon turns to leave and bows to Kanjelman on the way out.

Expressing his lack of confidence in the P.S., Kanjelman outlines his current plans to Boro, which must result in the complete destruction of their enemy.

"Do you expect everyone to die," Boro asks.

"It is unimportant who lives or dies," Kanjelman answers, "only that Kummen is reborn."

A gasp issues from behind them, and they whirl to face a distraught Monica, who holds a gun on her King, upset by what she has overheard. Kanjielman holds her eyes with his own, not knowing how to account for his intentions. His stare is too much for Monica, and she flees, dropping the gun at his feet.

Monica is utterly shattered in this scene. Among the Bera Guerillas, she was among the fiercest of fighters and tragically loyal to the King she has now heard disregard his own basic philosophy. She still cannot fire on him bathed in his seductive gaze, and chooses instead to run, carrying both mind and body away from her treacherous monarch. In reality, Kanjielman cares a great deal for his people, but for all his eloquence, lacks the words to explain to Monica that it is possible to care even more for the restoration of his country's former glory.

Out in the forest, Chirico has followed the Bera missile car to a gathering of guerilla vehicles--but does not stop to join them. Much to their surprise, the A.T. trailer rumbles right through the halted soldiers and on through the brush toward the palace.

As Chirico approaches in the stolen vehicle, an alert comes to Kanjielman, Boro, and Ypsilon in the palace monitor room. Ypsilon rises to move out, but Boro stops him and orders him to wait and let Chirico come to them.

At the palace perimeter, Chirico is stopped by a garrison of Turtles, but his group quickly disperses them in their stolen A.T.'s (with Chirico still in his Marshydog) and prepares to charge into the palace. Suddenly, Potaria leaps from his A.T., tells the others he will be back, and runs off before they can stop him.

Report of their entrance reaches Kanjielman, and Boro stops Ypsilon from leaving once again...It still is not time.

While Chirico, Fyana, and Kldera make things tough for the palace defenders, Potaria rushes through dark corridors and gauntlets of armed guards. One of them is Monica, whom he has entered the palace to find, and when she recognizes him, the two rush to each others' arms.

It is then that tragedy strikes--another palace guard enters the scene and fires, but the bullets do not hit Paul--Instead they slice their way through Monica! Shocked, Paul drags her inert body into a nearby chamber and holds off their attackers from the door while a dying Monica tells him what she has learned about her treacherous king. Sadly, she dies in Paul's arms and, heartbroken, he prepares to fend off approaching soldiers.

Far above, in the palace monitor room, Kanjielman and his men spot incoming signals--swarms of A.T. helicopters are approaching from the direction of Assemble EX-10, with Gon Ner himself in command. Furthermore, an interior monitor spots Chirico's group as they enter the palace's A.T. hangar and Fyana trades her Standing Turtle for a new Brutishdog. Ypsilon cries out in anguish at the sight, but Boro orders him again to stay put.

At the door of the hangar, Chirico looks upward and spots the squadron approaching from the air. As he ponders this development, Fyana demolishes the A.T. hangar with a grenade and the renegades flee from the exploding building back into the blazing conflict.

EPISODE 26 PRESSURE

At Gotho's house on the grounds of the now-empty Assemble EX-10, Coonna wearily works over Gotho's francelver, trying to get someone on the line for an update on the battle. Just as Gotho enters with lunch and tries to convince her to give up the futile task, the set crackles and a voice comes weakly through--Vanilla!

Excitedly, Coonna questions him about the status of the attack and how Chirico is doing, but there is little he can tell her--his squadron is quickly approaching the Holy Palace and he has to pay attention to tactical commands. He signs off and Gotho sullenly switches off his radio.

"Good luck, Vanilla," is all he can offer.

Gon Ner barks assault orders from his command chopper as Bera ground defenses open up on the incoming squadron. As the bomber planes move in to soften up the enemy, and Vanilla is ordered to lead a trio of guncopters through a strafing run that keeps the Bera defenders occupied so that Kuan Yu can lead his A.T. platoon into a drop.

THE STRIKEDOG UNVEILED



True to form, Kuan Yu orders someone else (Lou Shako) to take point position and yells attack strategies to his death-dealing platoons of Diving Beetles. Vanilla, meanwhile, lands and bails out of his helicopter just before it is demolished. He is now on foot in the middle of the war zone and runs off to find Chirico.

Elsewhere on the palace grounds, Chirico consults with Fyana and Kidera on their next move. Who do they go after first? Potaria has not yet returned, so they take the time to speculate on Ypsilon's whereabouts. His absence from the battle is puzzling...but then Fyana remembers him mentioning some new machine. Something deadly.

In a still-secured section of the palace, 'something deadly' is finally revealed to Boro and Ypsilon. A newly-arrived crate from Albert Kiri is opened, and inside is the long-awaited new A.T.—the Strikedog!

As palace soldiers prepare to grapple with the next wave of incoming invaders, Paul Potaria steals his way through the dank corridors of the palace. Laying into a pair of guards, he knocks one out and pins the other, demanding to know Kanjielman's location. The guard twists out from under Paul and lunges for his neck.

In the monitor room, reports of the battle roll in to the Holy King. There is little he can offer in the way of strategic advice, however, as things have now escalated to completely modernized combat. Ypsilon's A.T. is warming up, and the executive advisors seem convinced it will be the major factor in their retaliation.

The arrival and application of Ypsilon's high-tech Armored Trooper proves the final blow to Kanjielman's mental unrest. Top of the line mecha, against which he has struggled all his life, now inhabits his own empire. Very soon, however, Kanjielman's release will come.

Potario begins losing his struggle with the guard. Just as he begins to lose consciousness, however, someone slugs the palace soldier from behind: Vanilla! Rising to his feet, Potaria asks him about Chirico's progress, and the inert guard's belt radio beeps with new orders. The retaliatory strike is about to be launched.



Boro cautions Ypsilon as he climbs into the Strikedog's cockpit. This is the last chance he will have to amend his previous failure against the enemy. Glaring at his mentor, Ypsilon powers up the A.T. and speeds off toward the battle. A demon smile crosses Boro's face. One way or another, this will be the final confrontation.

Lou Shako leads Kuan Yu's platoon in his Berserga against Standing Turtles at the edge of the palace grounds. Just as they polish off the last Bera machine, a new defender is spotted, who rockets straight into them and smoothly barrels over Lou Shako. Ypsilon has struck!

Hungrily, the Perfect Soldier engages the EX-10 soldiers head on, swinging the Strikedog through their ranks in a graceful ballet of destruction. Only one objective is on his mind—to pick out and smash Chirico.

Shako rises in his Berserga and faces Ypsilon. The P.S. laughs dangerously.

"Chirico! At last!"

The Berserga and the Strikedog clash in thunderous fury, but Ypsilon is quick to lay his opposer on the ground, and Shako is forced to boil out as his A.T. explodes. Ypsilon grits his teeth in anger as he watches the Quentman scramble to safety.

"Chirico--where are you?!"

Scanning the battlefield, he spots another enemy A.T. still standing and guns his robot after it, thinking it must be his arch foe. It is actually Kuan Yu, who trembles in fear as the chase begins.

Still speculating on the location of Ypsilon and Boro, Chirico stands in an alcove with Fyana and Kidera, then raises his Marshydog's rifle at a dusty figure that suddenly appears in his visor.

"STOP! WAIT! DON'T SHOOT! IT'S ME!"

"Vanilla!"

The helicopter pilot babbles excitedly about the attack and tells them they are no longer to wait for Potaria--he has gone after Kanjielmann alone. This news decides their next move. Chirico sends Kidera and Vanilla to help Paul in his task. He and Fyana will hunt down Boro alone.

In the palace monitor room, Boro is informed of Ypsilon's progress and notices that Kanjielmann is not present. A controller tells him that the king has retired to his chamber to wait out the battle. Boro smiles. He is now in command.

Kanjielmann is weary of the conflict, and discusses the situation with his advisors as a guard enters his chamber with a wine trolley. Giving the executives permission to advise Boro as they see fit, he dispatches them and asks the guard for a large goblet of wine. Instead, the guard pulls out a gun and removes his helmet...It is Paul Potaria.

Finally face to face with his arch enemy, Potaria screams at the king for what he has brought his country to. By declaring war on aliens to his land, Kanjielmann betrayed his people, to whom he had hitherto taught the value of peace. Paul, who was once Kanjielmann's dearest friend, changed his name from Pota to Potaria in an effort to erase the relationship they once had. Now, Kanjielmann's actions have caused the death of Paul's lover, and the only sufficient payment is death. Pota's finger tightens on the trigger as he stares icily into his former friend's eyes...but he cannot end it this way.

As with Monica, Paul is almost seduced by Kanjielmann's gaze. Despite all the death and pain his cause has in-

flicted, a sincerity resides within the king that goes beyond words. This comes through in his eyes straight from a noble heart. He is hated by his enemies, but retains a stoutness of mind and body that earns him more than equal reverence from his followers.

Tossing the weapon aside, Paul shouts at the monarch to stand and undergo a different type of battle: lance-combat. Agreeing to the proposition, Kanjielmann tosses Potaria a scythe-tipped staff and closes the chamber door just as a guard comes upon the scene and gasps in horror. The king calmly hits a switch that closes a steel blast door over the wooden one. He turns. The stage is set.

Explosions thunder around them from outside as the two circle each other with the deadly lances.

"I used to win two of every three duels," the king comments.

"You'll lose this one!"

With that, Pota lunges into attack, and their death struggle begins.

In the corridor outside, palace guards have just wrenched the wooden door from its hinges to reveal the steel one behind it. Blowtorches are produced and a guard shouts for an A.T. to be summoned to the king's aid.

News of Kanjielmann's imperilment reaches Boro in the monitor room, who calls Ypsilon in the battlefield to return and aid the king.

Pausing to demolish Kuan Yu's Diving Beetle and again discover a mistaken identity, a frustrated Ypsilon answers Boro's summons...then glances up to see an Assemble EX-10 cargo chopper unleash its deadly complement--Diving Beetles numbering in the hundreds, descending on the palace in hover pods. Opening up on them with his Strikedog's gunclaw, Ypsilon shouts an alert to the control room...but even he will soon be overwhelmed.

For once, Kanjielmann seems evenly matched in lance combat by Paul Pota. The two twist and leap through every corner of the room with intricate thrusts and parries worthy of master swordsmen. But it ends with terrifying abruptness; Kanjielmann lunges at Paul with a death strike. At the last instant, Paul

sidesteps the thrust as the king sweeps past him...and almost without thinking, Pota twists his lance to run it completely through Kanjielmann's torso!

Impaled on Paul's blade, the King of Kummen slowly drops to the floor. This was indeed the duel he would lose.

In the main tower of the palace, Chirico accompanies Fyana through twisting corridors, blasting A.T.'s and footsoldiers alike in an effort to reach Boro himself. As they approach the monitor room at full speed, an alert is sounded.

"Chirico is coming!"

Boro gasps and orders the men to scramble. Just as he runs out of the room, Chirico's Marshydog screams around the corner and pulls up right in front of the hated man.

"BORO!"

Chirico glares triumphantly for a tense moment, enjoying the fear on his enemy's face...then kicks in his roller dash to pursue the now-fleeing Boro.



Outside, Ypsilon struggles against the onslaught of seemingly infinite attackers and is forced to abandon his position when a desperate call comes through. Chirico is after his master!

Oblivious to all of this, Paul Pota kneels next to Kanjielmann's mortally-wounded body as the king speaks through waves of deathly pain. Kanjielmann tells his former friend he knew of his impending death and welcomes it. His life's ambition was to restore the Kummen of old, in all its

traditional splendor. When intruders set foot in his land, Kanjielmann was forced to protect it however he could. When he finally had to resort to the very technology he had struggled against, he realized the old Kummen was gone forever...and knew that he would die with it.

Kanjielmann's last gesture is to give Paul a small, pencil-shaped shaft of metal.

"A key," he explains, "to escape. Live on. I am sorry for what I have done. You were always my friend."

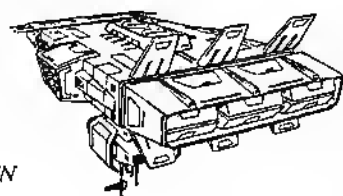
Stung by the king's words, Paul weeps as Kanjielmann's life fades--and is hurled backward by a gunshot from the guards that finally burst through the chamber door. Stepping in to finish the job, they are suddenly tossed forward by a devastating explosion and a Standing Turtle looms in the doorway behind them. It is Kidera, with Vanilla in tow.

Wheezing in terror, Boro flees into the lowermost portion of the palace tower--the mining shaft. Running downward on a metal gantry, he stops in horror as Chirico's Marshydog steps out on the level below him and opens fire.

The stalrwell blown out from under him, Boro manages to grab a steel handrail and holds on for dear life, suspended over the dark shaft that stretches down beyond sight. Chirico opens his hatch to store at his flailing nemesis.

The time has come for retribution.

EPISODE 27 DARK CHANGE



TELTAIN

Beyond the inferno Kummen has become, the spaceship TELTAIN quietly orbits Merukia, aboard which Albert Kiri complains to Aron and Guran of Boro's continued expenditure on 'worthless experiments.' The two scientists correct him, knowing full well the value of the Perfect Soldiers. But whether or not Ypsilon can get

Proto-1 back from Chirico remains to be seen...

Oblivious to Kiri's part in all of this, Gon Ner's squadron continues to assault the Holy Palace. Diving Beetles continue to descend into the valley. And war continues to rage.

Boro, meanwhile, glares at Chirico from his precarious position overhanging the mine shaft.

"Get it over with," he demands. "What are you waiting for? Kill me, murderer!"

But instead of simply ending the miserable false priest's life, Chirico barks questions about the single biggest mystery that has tormented him thus far--the origin of the Perfect Soldier. By slowly blasting away Boro's fragile support rail, Chirico gets his answers: when they discovered that Proto-1 was being constructed by the Merukian Army, the Secret Society captured her on RID and arranged to build her successor, Proto-2. Boro desperately explains the purpose of their presence here: physically, they are both perfect...but not mentally. After being subjected to emotional situations and relationships, their intended function has been destabilized. All they should know is pure hate. Therefore, the Perfect Soldiers are no longer perfect.

Then, a new voice crackles over Chirico's helmet radio, and Fyana glances up to see Ypsilon in his Strikedog watching from the level above them. He raises his A.T.'s gunclaw at Chirico. The time has come to finish their battle.

Outside, Gon Ner's command chopper looms menacingly over the palace, surveying the fighting on the ground below. Attempting to contact Kuan Yu for a status report, Gon Ner is frustrated to learn that his platoon leader is no longer responding.

Kuan Yu is still alive, however, and makes his way across the battlefield with Lou Shako. They slink around the corner of a pillar and Kuan Yu eyes the entrance to the main tower of the palace. Inside, doubtless, is the P.S. Shako is taken aback when Kuan Yu orders him to take the lead in their charge toward the tower, but plunges into the thick of the battle anyway.

Boro screams at Ypsilon to jump in to battle and kill Chirico, but the Strikedog pilot must weigh his options--can he get to his enemy before his master is killed? Chirico interrupts his quandry with a final question, perhaps the most important:

Can the P.S. process be reversed?

Everyone is frozen by Chirico's question, and Boro slowly blurts out his answer. It is not possible. Once programmed, a P.S. can never again become a normal human.

Having heard enough, Ypsilon challenges Chirico to begin their duel. Fyana cries for Ypsilon to stay back, and a new voice cuts across the radio network, heard only by Chirico: Bully Kidera, who has stepped into position just behind Ypsilon and can strike at a moment's notice. Chirico orders him to stay out of it, but Kidera protests.

"Idiot! I'll never get a better chance!"

With that, Kidera charges up behind the Strikedog in his Standing Turtle. Whirling quickly, Ypsilon sidesteps the attack and flips Kidera over the balcony--into the bottomless mine shaft! Kidera's A.T. plummets out of sight as the burly pilot shouts a characteristic farewell:

"Guess I couldn't help after all!"

As Bully disappears in a blossom of flame, Ypsilon opens fire on Chirico, knocking his Marshydog from the ledge. Boro's handhold finally gives out as well, and the adversaries fall swiftly, each managing to grab overhanging pipes to halt their descent.

Fyana shouts helplessly for Ypsilon to stop, but he ignores her cry and leaps off his own perch to pursue Chirico. His Strikedog lands on another level near Chirico's A.T., and as the two open up on each other, Boro crawls to safety on a nearby catwalk and radios for help.

Running for a nearby elevator, Boro prepares to descend to the bottom of the shaft to witness the outcome of the battle. Kuan Yu and Shako, meanwhile, have fought their way through the palace and arrive on the scene just as the climactic battle erupts between Red Shoulder and Perfect Soldier.

Kuan Yu radios Gon Ner, and the EX-10 commander orders his entire

squadron to land. The P.S. is within their grasp.

But elsewhere beyond the war-zone, a new party prepares to enter the conflict: the Merukians. Jan Paul Rochina leads a gigantic squadron of helicopters and bombers borrowed from Assemble EX-10 in a tight approach formation and discusses their plans with Battentaln via radio monitor.

Rochina's orders are simple: overwhelm the enemy. Move in and demolish everyone. The only non-expendable personage in the palace is their P.S. The rest are no longer of any use.

Vanilla drags the wounded Potaria through the war-torn palace in search of Chirico. Paul produces the key given him by Kanjelman, and turns it over to Vanilla. His final wish is that Chirico puts it to use.

Falling from level to level in the mine shaft, Chirico and Ypsilon clash in a brutal struggle to the death. Bounding off balconies, smashing through all pipes, they finally hit bottom, their A.T.'s buried up to the waist in a sea of gleaming Jijlrium crystals. Chirico is not surprised--worlds have been destroyed for this much Jijlrium, and it is now obvious why the Secret Society chose to bring their Perfect Soldiers here.

Watching from a nearby balcony, Boro shouts in disbelief at Ypsilon when he opens his Strikedog's hatch and glares at Chirico. Ignoring his master, Ypsilon challenges Chirico to hand-to-hand combat. They will end it man to man. Ypsilon scrambles out of his A.T. as Chirico raises his own hatch--but they are both halted by a hail of gunfire that cuts through the ground between them. They glance up to see Fyana standing over them in her Brutishdog. She will not let Ypsilon fight. Refusing her order coolly, Ypsilon pulls a gun and steps toward Chirico.

Fyana screams in torment and does the one thing she can--opens fire on Ypsilon! Everyone stares in shock as the young P.S. is hurled bodily across the chamber--then slowly rises to stare at his former tutor. Their eyes lock as blood oozes over Ypsilon's face, coloring his vision of Proto-1 in deathly scarlet.



This scene remains one of the most powerful and dramatic in all of VOTOMS. Fyana is frozen in horror by what she has done to the man who loved her in his own way. The blood streams down over Ypsilon's eyes as he narrows them at his attacker. Misunderstanding gives way to deadly hatred. The shock Fyana feels is akin to that of a mother who has just struck her own son and is struck back with scorn. But her path is irrevocably set...stability can never be restored between the Perfect Soldiers again.

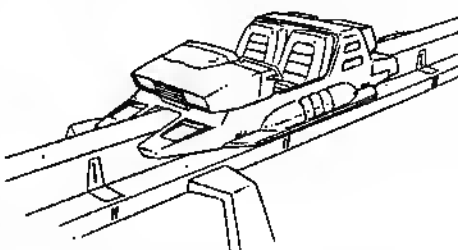
Chirico hears demonic laughter and looks up to see incendiary flares fall toward them. A voice echoes throughout the shaft as the flares strike bottom and an inferno begins--Gon Ner's. The EX-10 commander stands far above on a platform and barks at the gathered adversaries. Chirico has now outlived his usefulness. The P.S. is in Gon Ner's grasp, and all others will be destroyed!

Suddenly, however, the entire palace is shaken by a tremendous explosion--Rochina's squadron has

moved in, bombing the place and unleashing legions of Scopedogs that plow into battle with disregard for any of the combatants in their way.

Realizing he has been duped, Gon Ner shouts in betrayal as his balcony is blown out from under him, ending his callous life. Chirico and Fyana flee through the flames as Ypsilon stands frozen in the eye of the storm. Boro rushes up behind him and is buried by falling debris. He implores Ypsilon to free him, but it is too late. Frozen with indecision by these dramatic events, Ypsilon only stares coldly at his master as the hateful man's life draws to a close.

Chirico and Fyana lock hands and run from the scene to any safe passage they can find. Just as things begin to look hopeless for them, Vanilla zooms by in an appropriated monorail car. He knows exactly where to take them.



As the explosives in the mine shaft behind them reach critical point, a column of flame bursts straight out into the open sky. The end has begun.

But out of it come new beginn-



ings: Vanilla has lead Chirico and Fyana to a long tunnel leading upward to freedom. And before them lies, undamaged, an escape shuttle. They examine it and discover a P.S. jjirium capsule, doubtless intended for Ypsilon if Boro ever needed a quick escape from here. Now, however, it will be used by these two--and Vanilla hands Chirico Potaria's key, which will activate the shuttle's control systems.

"But what about you," Chirico asks.

"Don't worry about me, I'll get out of here all right. You've done enough--now get going with her: call it your honeymoon," Vonilla chuckles.

Vanilla's insistence on staying behind represents the pinnacle of his growth as a man of honor. The Vanilla of Uodo would have shown no hesitation in jumping into the shuttle. The Vanilla of Kummen lost everything he gained with money and has now regained it all with honor. Though he remains the wise-cracking smart alec he has always been, he can never revert to the stagnant philosophies of Uodo. He has basically grown up, and earned far more respect from Chirico than he

ever could have hoped for in the past.

But before Chirico can get inside, a cruel voice booms across the bay...Kuan Yu stands on a balcony above them with Lou Shako. The former task force commander has now finally found the infuriating P.S. for which he has been held responsible all this time. Vanilla protests, telling Kuan Yu his mission doesn't matter any more...the Merukians will destroy everyone in their attack. But Kuan Yu couldn't care less--all he wants now is simple revenge.

As he raises his gun to end his adversaries' troublesome lives forever, Chirico shakes in anger--and watches incredulously as Shako takes a stand! Having heard enough, the giant Quentman grabs Kuan Yu and lifts him over his head.

"I've wanted to do this for a long time!"

Shako tosses Kuan Yu off the balcony into the shaft below, and the squad leader tumbles, screaming, out of their sight forever.

This action displays the level of self-honor inherent in all Quentmen. Shako follows his conscience when orders become erratic. Finally witness to the

end of either Chirico or Kuan Yu, Shako weighs the qualities of both men against each other and comes to the aid of the one he considers more deserving of life.

That concluded, Shako joins Vanilla as Fyana stretches out in her jjirium capsule.

"Where will we go," she asks Chirico. "I'm a P.S...I will be hunted."

"Boro is gone," he reminds her. "We'll find a safe place together."

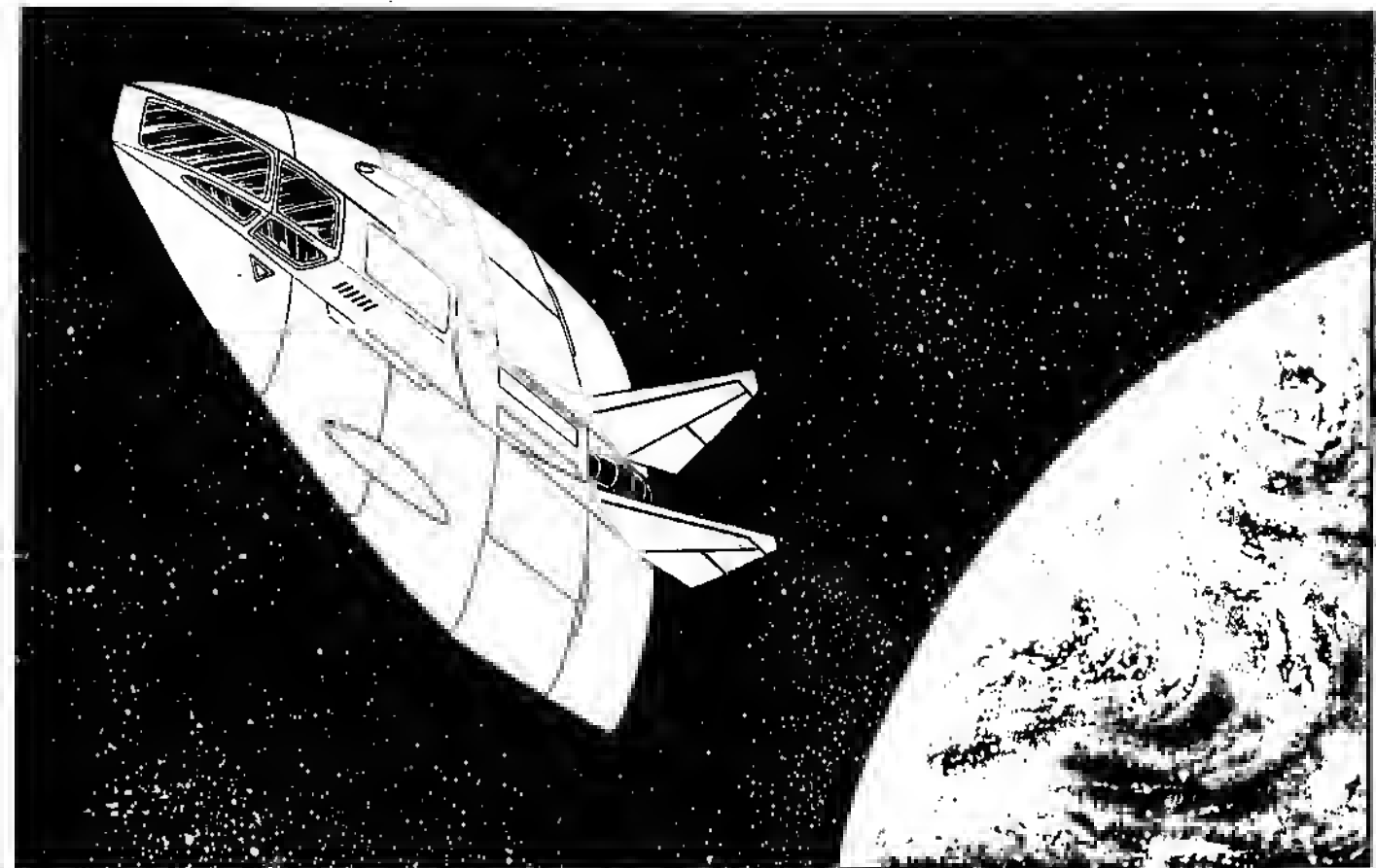
Slotting the key, Chirico powers up the shuttle and blasts off just in time to demolish a trio of Merukian Scopedogs that have just entered the chamber.

Shako and Vonilla watch the shuttle disappear into the sky and wonder what will become of their friends.

Kummen has fallen...but what lies ahead?

EPISODE 28 THE LAW

A recap of events in Uodo, centering on the Merukian observation of Chirico Cuvie as he pursues the members of the Secret Society.



ARMORED
TROOPER
VOTOMS

装甲騎兵

ボトムズ

VIEWER'S GUIDE
PART 6

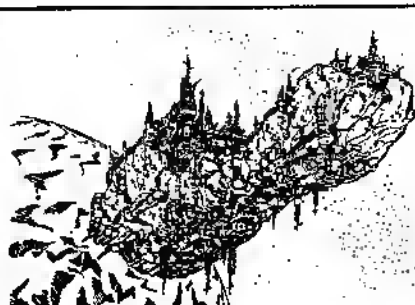
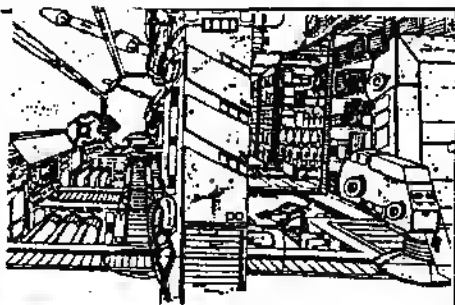
OUTER SPACE/SUNSA

EPISODES 29-39

This segment of VOTOMS carries the pursuit of Chirico Cuvie into Balalant-dominated space on board the mysterious Space Battleship X. Along the way, Chirico's past in the infamous Red Shoulder Battalion returns to haunt him, throwing new light on both his own psyche and his growing relationship with Fyana.

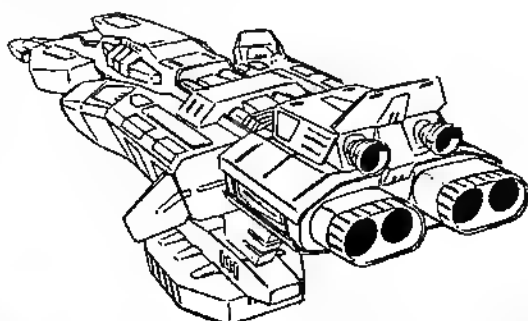
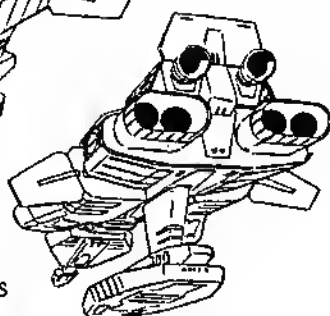
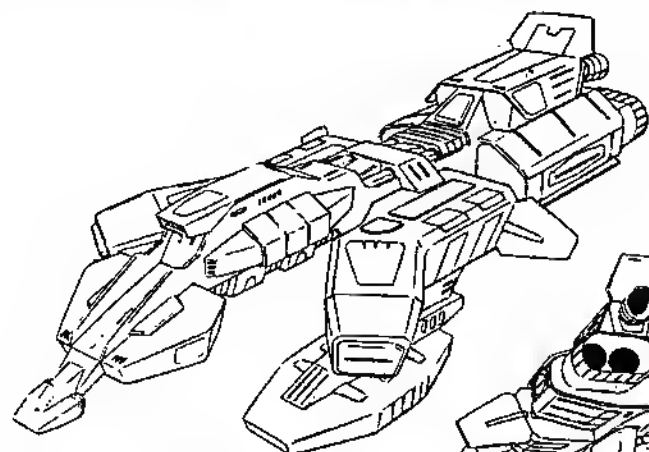
The Secret Society is hot on their trail, however, and it is Ypsilon himself who pursues his nemises to the Mars-like desert world Sunsa, once the sight of perhaps the bloodiest conflict ever fought in the Hundred Year's War. Also following the embattled couple is Jan Paul Rochina, who makes a fateful decision concerning his involvement with the Merukian Army.

These episodes offer the most intense personal views of the characters to date by whittling down the scale of the storyline and concentrating on the questions that arise around Chirico and Fyana's decision to remain together. By the end of the events on Sunsa, things have grown steadily to a powerful climax containing both the decisive encounter with Ypsilon and a dramatic revelation that will change Chirico's life forever.



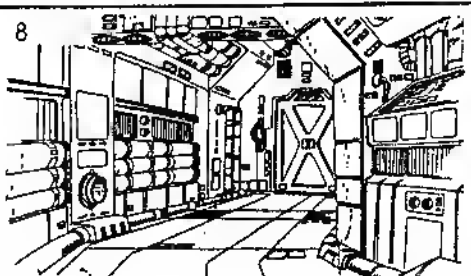
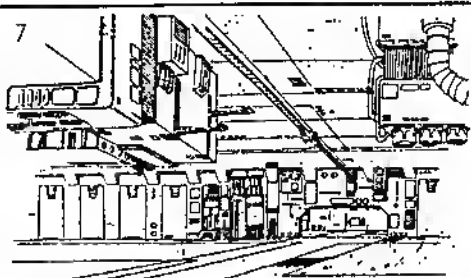
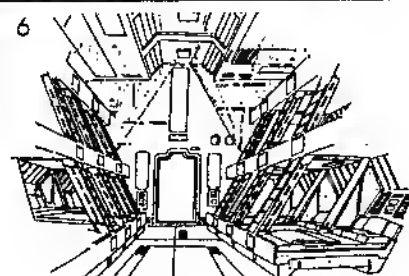
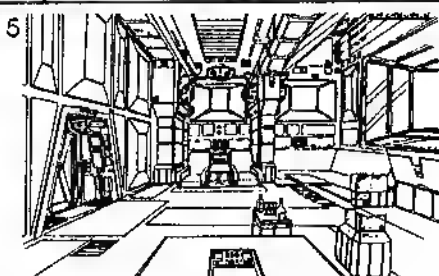
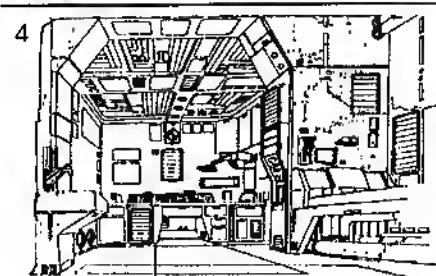
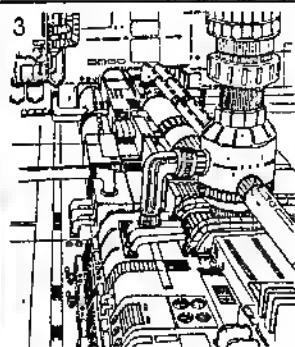
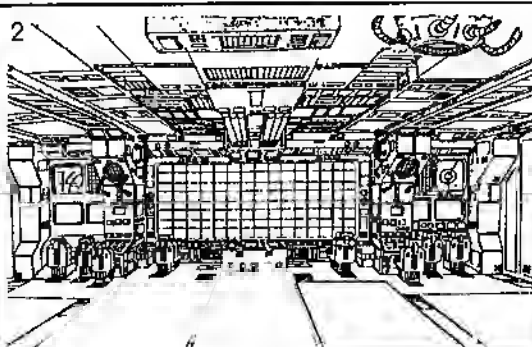
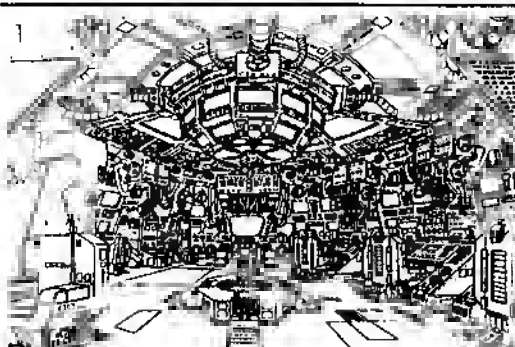
SPACE BATTLESHIP X

A mysterious, unnamed spaceship on which Chirico and Fyana find themselves after escaping Kummen. The giant vessel is operational and fully-stocked with weapons, but contains no crew. In reality, it is self-automated, its computers controlled by a source neither Chirico nor Fyana are aware of and has not yet been reckoned with. Unable to control the direction of the ship, they drift into Balalant territory and are forced into battle.



INTERIORS:

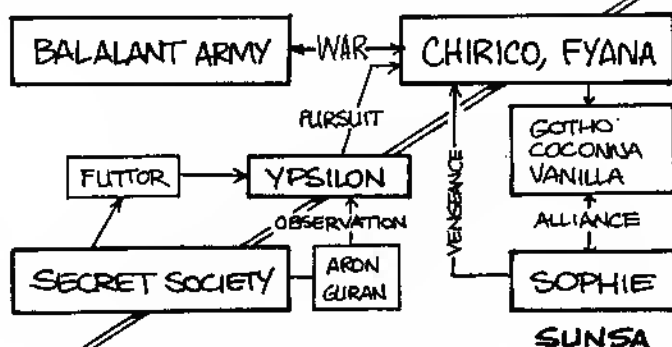
- | | |
|----------------|------------------|
| 1. Bridge | 5. Lounge |
| 2. Film Room | 6. Crew Quarters |
| 3. Engine Room | 7. Hangar |
| 4. Medical Lab | 8. Corridor |



ALIGNMENT CHART A

Forced into war with the Balalant, Chirico and Fyana are also pursued by Ypsilon and the Secret Society into the hands of Sophie and her scrap gang on Sunsa, who maintain an alliance with Bruze Gotho.

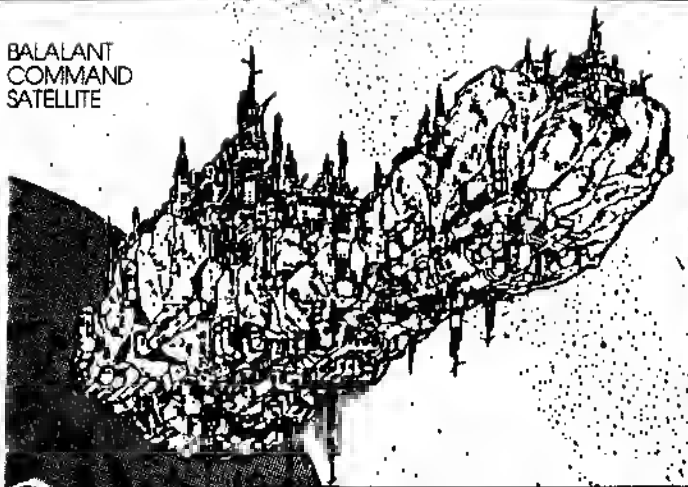
SPACE



THE BALALANT UNIFIED FORCE

Long-time foe of the Gilgamesh Army, the Balalant are heavily armed and extremely efficient fighters. Though they can boast no Red Shoulder A.T. battalion, they rely on many types of weaponry and prove a formidable enemy for all who oppose them.

BALALANT
COMMAND
SATELLITE



ZANJENEI

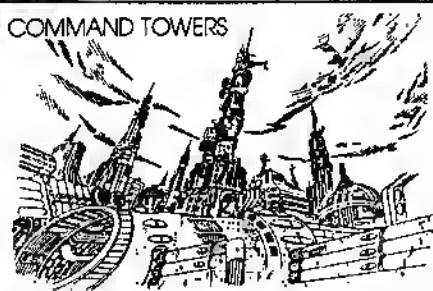
Supreme Admiral of the Balalant Space Navy, Zanjenei issues orders from his Command satellite and is forced to decide how best to handle the renegade Chirico. With the ongoing treaty between the Gilgamesh and Balalant, the arrival of a battle-ready

Merukian Soldier in alien territory is the cause of much consternation for Zanjenei and his advisors.

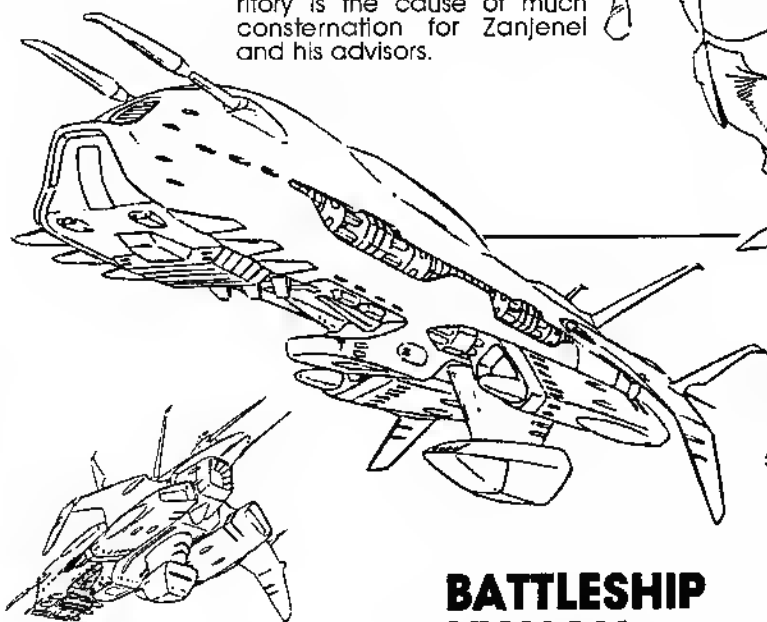
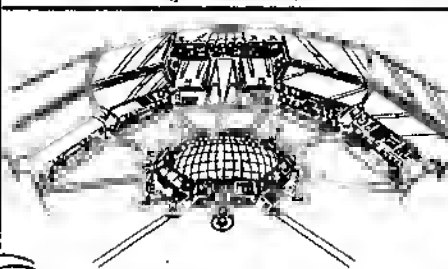
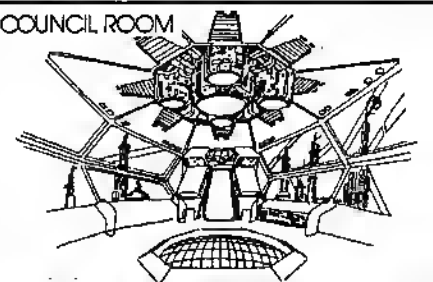


ZANJENEI'S
ADVISORS

COMMAND TOWERS



COUNCIL ROOM



BATTLESHIP LESLION

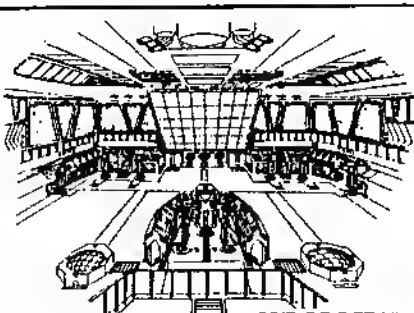
One of the Balalant Navy's heavier-class ships, LESLION leads the fleet that engages Chirico upon his entry into Balalant Space. When TELTAIN makes its appearance there as well, LESLION defends its territory.



LESLION
CAPTAIN
BREWER



CREW



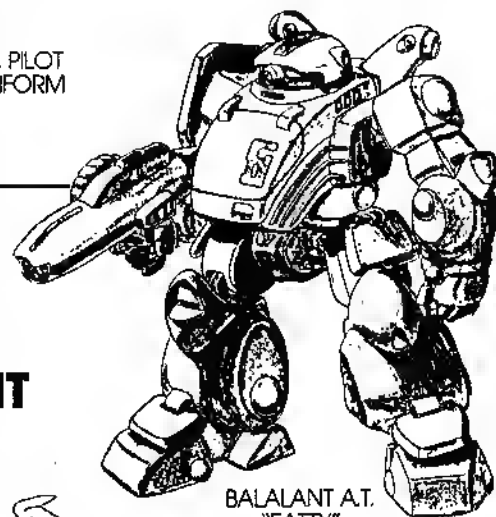
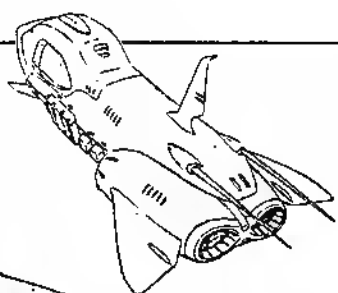
BRIDGE DETAIL



BALALANT SOLDIER
UNIFORM

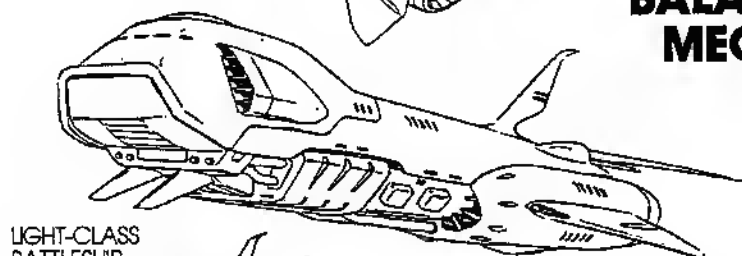


A.T. PILOT
UNIFORM

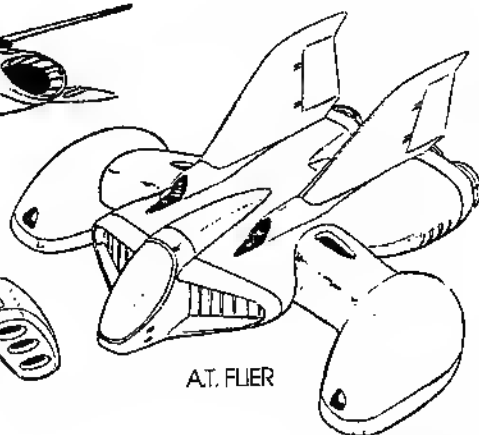
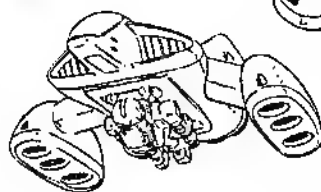
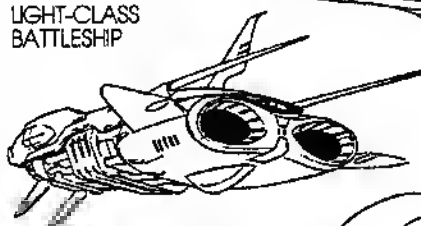


BALALANT A.T.
"FATTY"

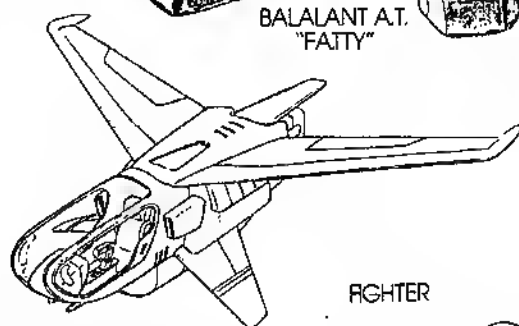
BALALANT MECHA



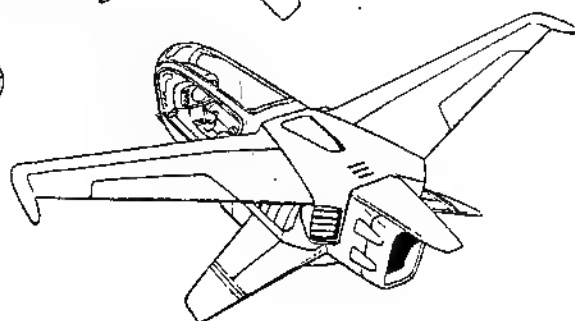
LIGHT-CLASS
BATTLESHIP



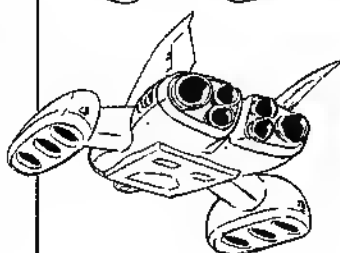
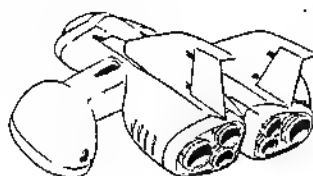
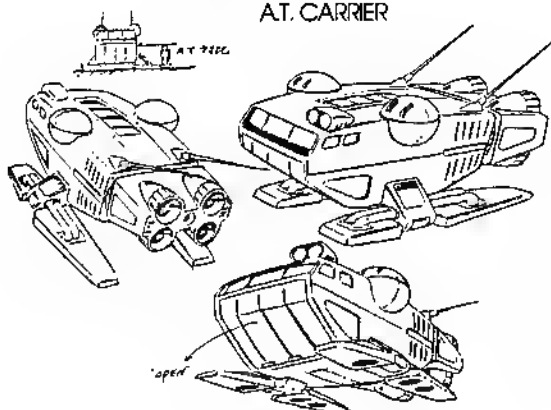
A.T. FLIER



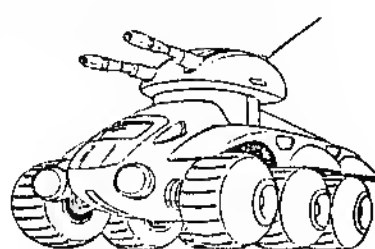
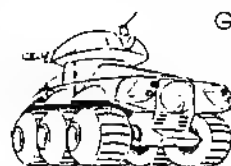
FIGHTER



A.T. CARRIER

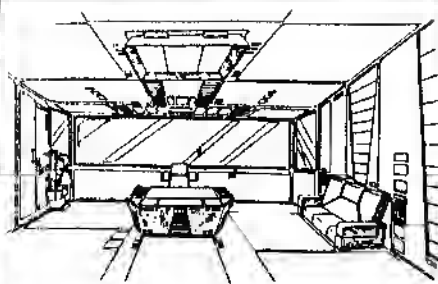


GROUND
TANK

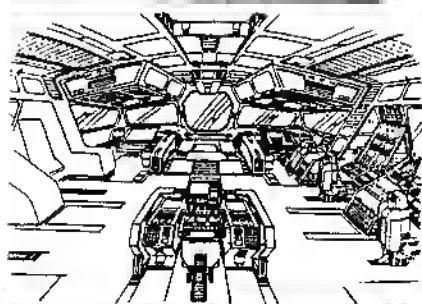
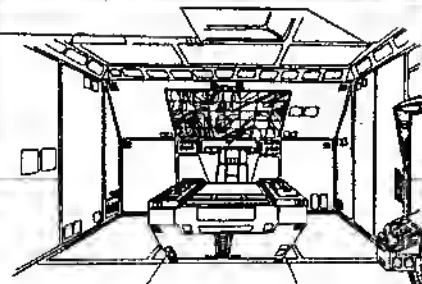


LOCALES

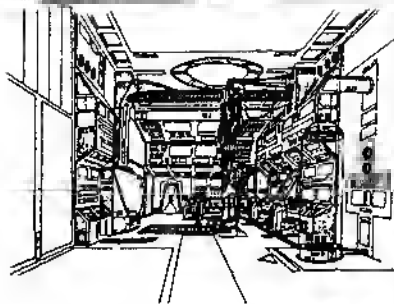
BATTENTAIN'S
OFFICE
(episode 30)



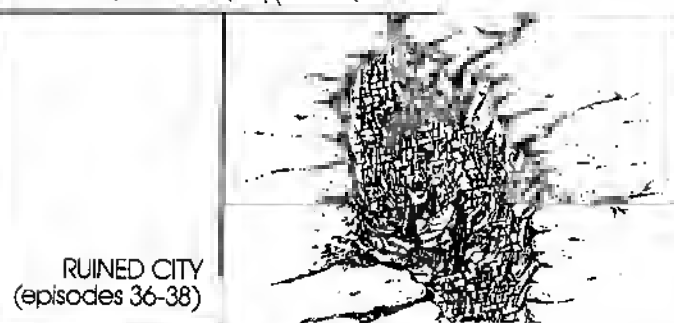
ROCHINA'S
OFFICE
(episode 30)



TELTAIN
BRIDGE
(episodes 31-39)



TELTAIN
MEDICAL BAY
(episodes 31-38)



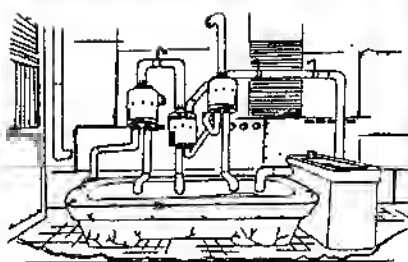
RUINED CITY
(episodes 36-38)



RUINED CITY
JJIRIUM CACHE
(episode 36)

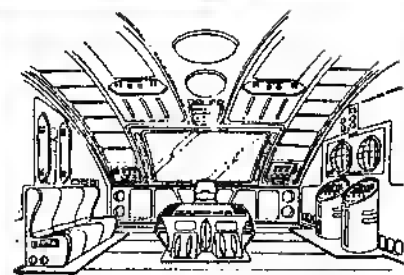


RUINED CITY
INTERIOR DETAIL
(episode 36)

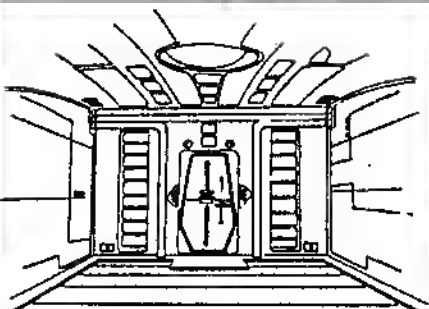
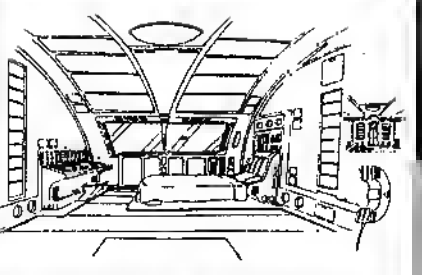


RUINED CITY
JJIRIUM BATH
(episode 36)

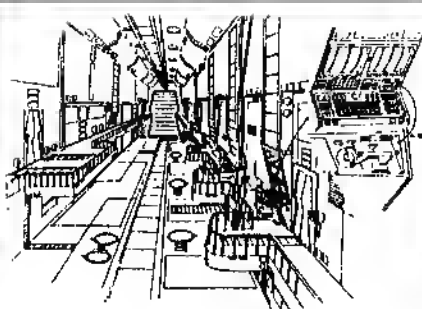
LESLION
LOUNGE
(episode 37)



LESLION
ROCHINA'S
CABIN
(episode 37)



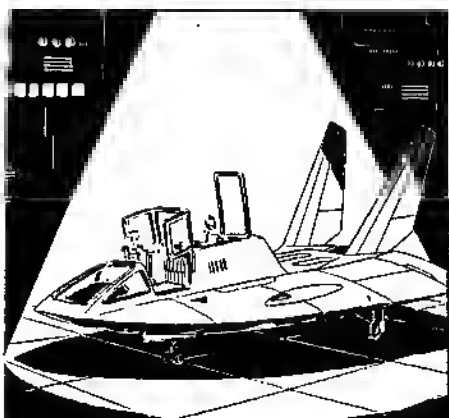
LESLION
CELL
(episode 37)



LESLION
A.T. HANGAR
(episode 39)

EPISODE 29 TWO PEOPLE

Somewhere in the icy darkness of outer space, a gigantic warship lumbers silently on its solemn voyage...but within its cavernous hangar bay, a sleeping couple stirs--Chirico and Fyana, whose space shuttle has delivered them here from the destruction of Kummén. They awake and look around them, wondering exactly where "here" is.



Exiting the shuttle, they leave the hangar to cautiously inspect the rest of the battleship. Chirico keeps his handgun primed for use, but their search of the cargo bay, operating engine room, even the fully-stocked A.T. hangar, reveals nothing. Resting in the empty crew area, they realize they are the only people aboard this mysterious ship, and after sharing a hopeful look, decide to seek out the control room.

They find it without incident, and its flashing lights and indicators show full automatic operation in all sections. Chirico and Fyana activate control screens, but can only receive internal camera signals. The onboard computer refuses to divulge where the ship is from, why it picked them up, or to wherever it travels. There is nothing the two can do to stop it.

Resigned to let the ship take them wherever it pleases, Chirico and Fyana relax in the lounge and pour two glasses of a beverage he has found in the crew quarters. Fyana toasts their safe togetherness, then giggles when Chirico begins to cough after his first sip of the drink. Through spluttering laughter, Chirico sheepishly admits he has never had alcohol before...and his friends always warned him to stay away from it!

The two stand side by side before a viewport and gaze at the quiet stars. All is calm for a change in their lives.

"Wherever we go," Fyana says, "we have each other."

Slowly, she eases her hand into his and leans on his shoulder...

When a brash trumpeting of music splits the silence of the chamber, catching both of them by surprise and ending their idyllic mood. The music walls on maddeningly as they sprint through assorted areas of the ship trying to discover its source.

Chirico is the first to locate it--and the sight that accompanies the music freezes his blood: a military documentary film projected on a large video screen. The film is full of death--bloody, violent battlegrounds on which Gilgamesh and Merukian Scopedogs demolish anyone and anything in their path. Moreover, the film cannot be turned off--the computer has full control here as well.

Fyana enters the room and sees Chirico standing speechless before the terrifying spectacle. She is chilled as she realizes what is being shown: these are films of Red Shoulder Battalion in action...the same unit in which Chirico took part. She stares sympathetically at him as his worst nightmares are brutally thrust upon him.



"Someone wanted me to see this," he mutters, "Someone wanted to remind me of my war."

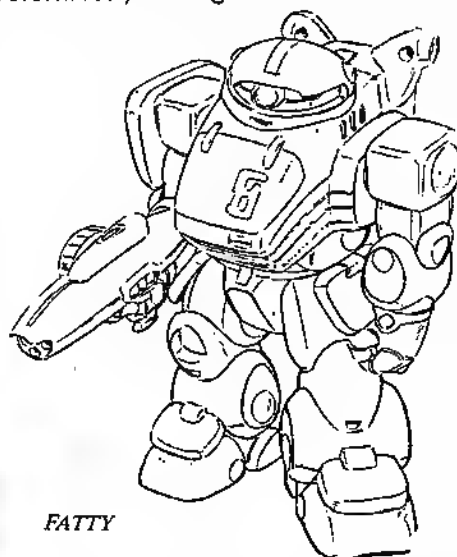
Walking dejectedly away, Chirico returns to the lounge and the bottle of alcohol. Despite its wrenching side-effects, he takes liberal drinks

and stares at Fyana, who watches sadly.

"I was meant to fight," he thinks to himself, "my heart cannot feel love...it can only kill."

"Whatever you are," she thinks to him, "doesn't matter to me. I am a Perfect Soldier. I am like you." But as he walks away to brood, she realizes there is nothing she can do for him. He has to think it out for himself.

But the music will not let him do even that...for even the crew bunks offer no shelter from it as it starts up once more, drawing Chirico back to the film room to relive his horrors again. Fyana re-enters to see him standing helplessly before his past. The screams and explosions of the video imagery thunder relentlessly through the chamber...

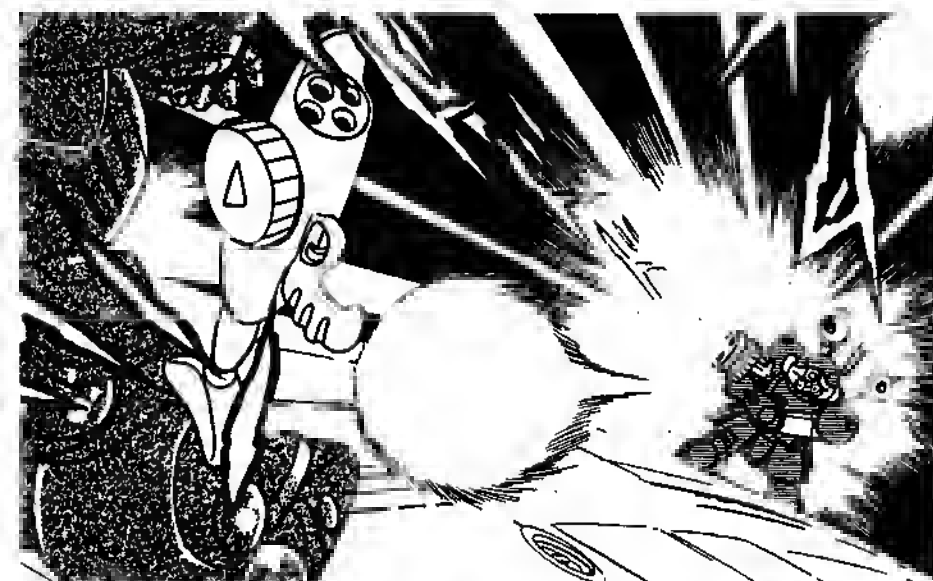


FATTY

And are replaced by a new sound: a transmission from two incoming warships who fire warning shots and order them to prepare for boarding. They have entered Balant space. The screen flashes to the image of incoming A.T.'s--a platoon of Balant Fatties--and Chirico is off and running for the Scopedogs kept elsewhere in the ship.

Sadly, Fyana watches from the control room as the intruders touch down on their battleship and begin examining its surface when a devastating explosion erupts in their midst. Abruptly, Chirico slams into the group in a Scopedog armed with bazooka and vernier pack. Reeling from his assault, the Fatties fire back, but are swiftly out-fought. Chirico the killing machine has returned.

Brief shots are traded with the



Balalant spaceships as well, and when the invading force is whittled down to three A.T.'s, they are ordered to withdraw.

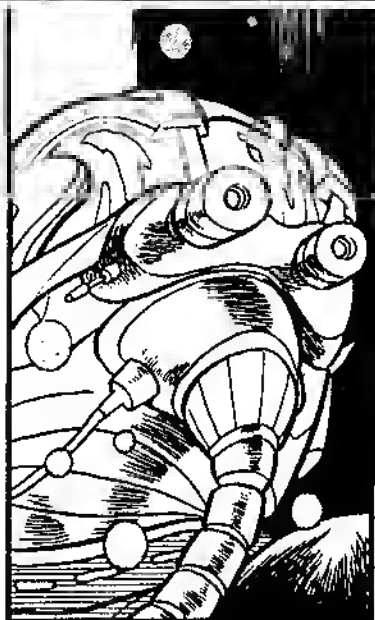
Chirico maneuvers his Scopedog toward the ship's hatch, realizing the time of peace is over. The Balalant will return in greater numbers...and his personal war has begun again.

EPISODE 30 PHANTOM

Preparing for a fresh assault from their Balalant pursuers, Chirico and Fyana rush to their battleship's weapons consoles...but before they can bring the vessel's guns to bear, the enemy ships bombard them with laser fire, blowing a hole in the bulkhead right next to Fyana. As the air in their chamber rushes violently out into space, Chirico pulls her to safety into the next cabin. Their only defense now is the Scopedogs.

A new platoon of Balalant A.T.'s swarms toward the mysterious battleship, and almost before they can react, Chirico has launched a new attack on them from his solitary Scopedog. He takes the brunt of the Fatties head on, but when the number of the enemy begins to overwhelm him, Chirico is forced to retreat around the massive edges of the ship.

Fyana watches his progress, then rushes to his aid when the Balalant invaders score several damaging hits on Chirico's A.T. By the time she has flown out to rescue him and finish off his attackers, Chirico's Scopedog is limbless...and he fades from con-



sciousness as droplets of his blood float ominously around him in the airless cockpit.

While the Balalant forces regroup, news of the battle reaches Admiral Zanjenei and his executive staff on the Balalant Command Satellite. He is understandably alarmed by the fact that a hostile ship is defying their treaty with the Gilgameth and entering Balalant territories. So far, twenty A.T.'s have been lost in the fighting, and an audio recording of Chirico's transmissions to Fyana reveal an even more disturbing fact--there is reference to the P.S., which Zanjenei knows to mean Perfect Soldier.



"According to my information," he informs his men, "the Gilgameth have never completed the Perfect Soldier Project." But they all know full well only a P.S. could have fought them off so effectively, so Zanjenei decides no chances can be taken: the ship and its defenders must be captured at all cost.

Far away, on planet Merukla, news of the conflict reaches the ears of Jan Paul Rochina. No one seems to know where the battleship is heading, so Rochina orders continued monitoring, and an idea forms surrounding these events. Colling in a female computer technician, Rochina asks for unresolved data on the recent Kummien conflict, specifically involving the destruction of Kanjelman's palace. According to the girl's data, a single vessel escaped the war--a tiny space shuttle that launched quickly away from the planet and was picked up by a larger object--probably the very same one that is causing the stir in Balalant territories.

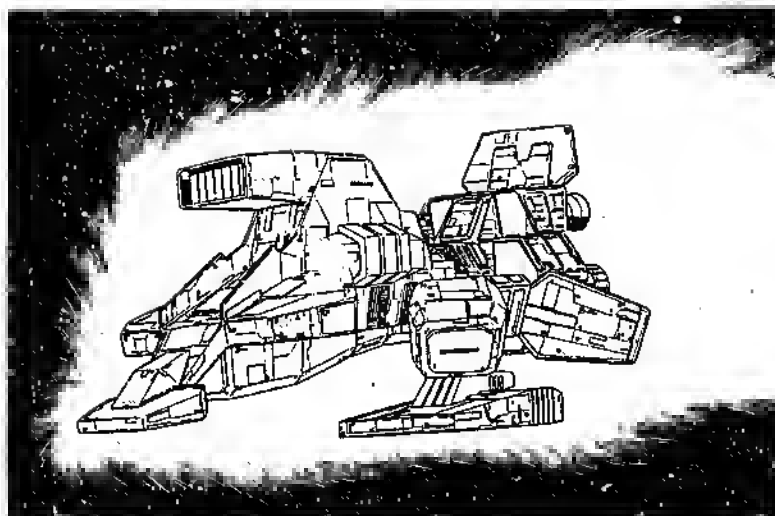
Rochina's phone buzzes and he accepts a call from "Bluebird," one of his top informants. According to Bluebird, the Balalant are definitely in hot pursuit of the ship and are holding back from opening fire...but the info-net is extremely tight--they are desperate to keep the situation a secret. Rochina is intrigued. Whatever is aboard that ship must

be of dire importance.

Reporting the news to Battentain, however, Rochina is alarmed when his superior officer orders him to cease his efforts concerning this event.

"You are not doing your job," Battentain says. "forget about that ship!"

It is then that Rochina makes a fateful decision. Smoothly, he tells Battentain he is sure Chirico is involved...and since the Gilgarneth have proved incapable of capturing him, Rochina quite simply states that he will join the Balaant in their pursuit. Battentain is speechless, but there is nothing he can do to stop Rochina's intentions.



An officer of high standing in the Merukian Army, Rochina nevertheless makes his decision to defect with fierce conviction. Jan Paul's loyalty to his superiors is outweighed by his sense of duty; when their wishes no longer follow the actions he believes should be taken, he takes them himself. Chirico's renegade nature also intrigues him to the point that he will take bold steps such as this one. What will become apparent by the end of this segment is that Rochina also knows an ominous secret about him...one of which Chirico himself knows nothing.

On the battleship, the documentary music again blares across all screens, and Fyana dashes to find the wounded Chirico watching the film, sullenly slumped against a wall. She tries to convince him of his need for rest, but he refuses, pushing her away. Rising, he attempts to stride away on his injured leg but immediately stumbles to the floor, helpless and weak.

Stretching Chirico out in the medical room, Fyana redresses the wound as the music continues to thunder through the ship. Every screen in every chamber flashes through the scenes of destruction and nothing can stop the maddening onslaught.

Later, however, Fyana rests in much-needed quiet. But abruptly, the trumpeting starts up again, and she wakes to find Chirico gone from his bed. He has been drawn back to the film room again, and though he is unsteady, he thinks he has found a way to end his nightmares--to blast them with his armored magnum! Fyana pleads with him to lower the weapon. Violence cannot stop violence. But, overwhelmed by the

monter communications of the Balaant fleet. Mercifully, the malignancy ends, restoring normal operation to the monitor screens. Deciding to check up on Chirico from the bridge, she activates remotes in the medical room...but Chirico has again left his resting place.

Spotting him in the A.T. hangar, she goes to him and asks once again for him to get some rest. He stares blankly.

"Who are you?"

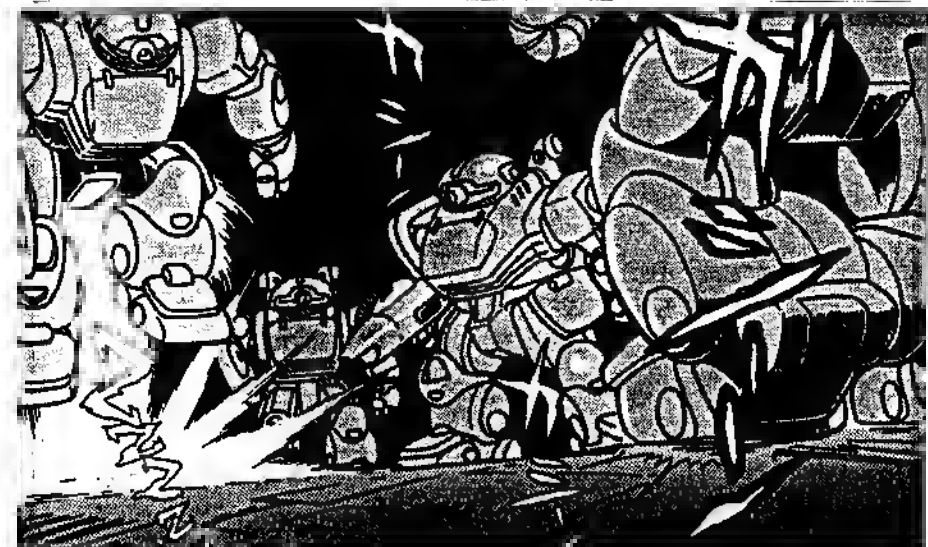
Injured, drugged, delirious, he walks slowly toward a light in one corner of the chamber. Fyana watches sadly as he babbles insanely.

"Who's that calling me? What do you want? How can I reach you? TAKE ME!"

Though lost in delirium, Chirico's perceptions are dead on; someone is indeed orchestrating these events. This will not become apparent until the end of the saga, however, when Chirico finally confronts his heritage and learns of his destiny.

With that, he pounds madly on the wall, and Fyana yanks him away. Pulling him to the deck, she cries for him to stop hurting himself when the entire ship suddenly makes a violent shudder--Fatties have returned in even greater numbers, now blasting holes in the hull of the battleship to gain entrance.

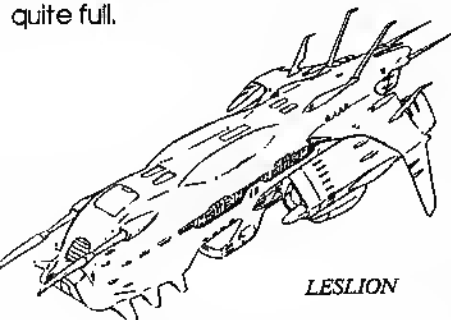
Dragging a comatose Chirico to a dark alcove nearby, Fyana covers him with a sheet and decides she must take the defense. Resolutely, she leaves him alone and sprints back into the A.T. hangar.



Climbing into a Scopedog, she rockets out into space, and Chirico wakes up in time to watch her engage the enemy. Slightly more alert this time, he staggers toward a Scopedog. Leaning weakly against the cold steel of the A.T., Chirico laments that when he finally opened his heart to another, his own mind closed it back up...his own mind wants nothing but to fight.

EPISODE 31 INVIOLEABLE REGION

As a new wave of Balalant A.T.'s approach Chirico's ship, he and Fyana await their coming in a pair of fully-armed Scopedogs. Though weakened by his previous injury, Chirico still proves a deadly foe for his enemy—for when the fight begins anew, the invaders have their hands quite full.



LESLION

Trailing the spaceship, however, is the ever-present fleet of Balalant warships, led by the Battleship LESLION. The Captain ponders his enemy's ability when losses of over forty Balalant soldiers are reported...in this postwar period, no one would dare violate their treaty with the Gilgath. Yet, the new enemies fight on...and he is convinced they are genuine Perfect Soldiers—no one else could fight so skillfully.

Chirico and Fyana battle on. When a Fatty explodes before Chirico and its deceased pilot floats by his Scopedog, he is reminded of his own deathflight away from RID so long ago...and in this split-second of distraction, his A.T. is brutally struck by enemy fire. Screaming in horror, Fyana grabs his smoking A.T. and hauls him back into the ship, only narrowly missed by Balalant guns.

This disappearance of resistance is reported to LESLION's captain, who issues new orders: not to kill the

enemy, but enter the ship and capture them, destroying all A.T.'s on board in the process.

As the Fatties enter the ship, Fyana cares for Chirico, whose injuries have been worsened by this new battle. Despondent, Chirico asks her to leave him to die, but she refuses. Leaving him for a time, she sneaks through the ship, avoiding Balalant soldiers, and reaches the sick bay to search for medication.

As she rummages frantically through the supplies, a shudder goes through the ship—its engines have fired. The gargantuan vessel lumbers forward with this newfound energy, and the Balalant decide to split up: half will go after the A.T.'s and half will try and disable the engines to halt the ship.

Sneaking back to Chirico's bedside, Fyana feeds him medicine, stirring him from his current catatonia. He again asks her to leave...for he now believes a new foe will be searching for them: Ypsilon. Shocked by this realization, Fyana ignores Chirico's pleas and pulls a bazooka out of one corner of the room when the footsteps of approaching Fatties can be heard. Chirico slips back into unconsciousness, his last sight that of a Fatty breaking down the door to be met by a devastating burst from Fyana's weapon.

Caught back up in the battle, Fyana runs through the dusty corridors of the ship, right past a quartet of Balalant A.T.'s. Dodging their fire, she reaches her Scopedog and powers up to engage them head on.

Elsewhere, other Fatties go to work on the engines. Locating energy feedlines, they begin cutting but are interrupted by gunfire—Fyana has finished off her attackers and now continues her assault! She slices a devastating path through the soldiers, but is forced to abandon her Scopedog when it is similarly damaged. She then rushes to the A.T.

assembly chamber to find even more Fatties smashing the equipment.

Outside, wreckage of long-dead spaceships float past the ship as it continues on its way. The captain of LESLION is given a new option; the troublesome vessel is now in their sights. If he wants to destroy it, he may. Considering the situation, however, he chooses to simply follow and wait for a report from his troops.

Leaving the Fatties to do their work, Fyana gazes out a viewport at flotsam.

"Someone," she thinks, "must be controlling this ship. But who?"

Chirico thinks the same thing as violent memories of an old foe flash through his mind: Ypsilon.



FUTTOR

Not far away, the spaceship TEL-TAIN trails the Balalant fleet that pursues Chirico. On board are Futtur, Aron, Guran, and a very-much-alive Ypsilon, who undergoes a tiresome series of tests to supply the two scientists with data. Ypsilon is quiet but irritable and throws sharp looks at his observers whenever Proto-1 is mentioned. He is seeking her again.

Futtur, meanwhile, confers with his crew about the ongoing events. By monitoring communications, they



have realized Chirico is the object of pursuit, and that Proto-1 is probably with him...but the ship is a mystery.



FUTTOR'S
CHIEF OFFICERS

While they speculate, Ypsilon is hooked up to a new kind of test: a computer-enhanced romantic confrontation between Chirico and Fyana that makes his blood boil. Furious, he tears himself out of his electrodes to check the progress on the bridge, and the two scientists are left with new data. The film he has been shown was meant to encourage his fighting spirit...but violent emotions are awakening as well.

The chief reason for Ypsilon's irritability is still his confusion over Proto-1's actions. Though she struck out at him in Kummen and sided with the enemy, he remains infatuated with her and is blindly convinced that she will be his in the end.

Futtor is given new information on the chase. There is a danger of being detected by the Balant fleet, but he does not care. All he wants to do is find Chirico and Proto-1...and nothing will get in his way.

Like his predecessors, Futtor is a fanatic where the pursuit of Chirico is concerned. Following this commander proves a traumatic experience for his crewmen, but this member of the Secret Society does maintain a slightly higher regard for his subordinates. Mistakes made in space can cause grievous consequences, so Futtor recognizes the value in maintaining a top-level crew.

A dusty planet looms far ahead of the strange spaceship aboard which Fyana cares for a sleeping Chirico. They have weathered a good deal of the storm already...but the worst is yet to come.

EPISODE 32 YPSILON

While the planet looms ever closer to the ship, Fyana watches over Chirico, wondering what will happen next.

On the Balant Command Satellite, a heated argument is in progress among the executive council about what to do. Not knowing where the ship came from and whether or not it contains a P.S. is a very delicate matter...for if they attack, the Gligameth treaty could be endangered.

Zanjenei halts the argument with a calm solution: they will continue to monitor the ship. If a fight breaks out, secrecy can be maintained. The important thing now is to watch where it heads.

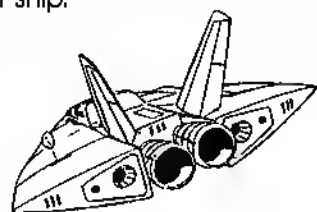


The Balant fleet, therefore, is streamlined down to a single observatory vessel, a cruiser of the lighter class, while the rest of the ships await further orders. Noticing this, Fyana decides on a desperate course of action. Kissing a sleeping Chirico and asking him to wait for her, she takes off in the shuttle they arrived with. Her destination is the Balant ship.

Aboard the TELTAIN, Albert Kiri advises Futtor and Ypsilon via transceiver on the crisis. Chirico and the mysterious ship must be destroyed, for he still retains knowledge that could hurt them...and if there is no alternative, Fyana must be killed as well.

While Aron and Guran attach a set of brain wave electrodes to Ypsilon on the bridge, a report comes through concerning new action: a shuttle from Chirico's ship has been spotted approaching the Balant

cruiser. Futtor's command is simple and direct--to prepare for firing on the larger ship.



Bringing the shuttle to a stop, Fyana stares down the barrels of Balant cannons. She makes a plea for help to the captain, identifying herself as the P.S. The crew is astonished, and the captain answers.

"Are you the only one?"

"Yes! Take me, but please help Chirico--he is badly hurt!"

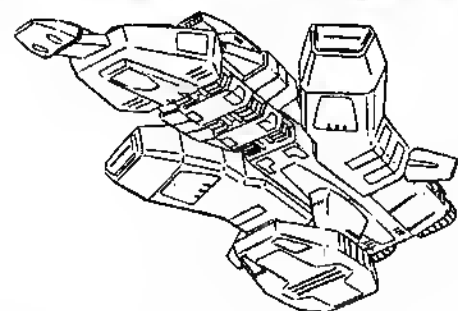
Amazed that their enemy has simply come to them, the captain acknowledges Fyana's request. Thankful, almost in tears, she moves to dock with the ship...

And out of nowhere rocket a pair of missiles that blast the Balant vessel to pieces, blowing her tiny ship away like so much jetsam. Shocked, she regains control and speeds back to Chirico, her last hope for aid shattered.

Confirming a direct hit, Futtor orders the transmissions played back, and Fyana's cries are heard across the bridge. Ypsilon trembles with anger, and his observers watch tensely as his psycho-readings make a strong rise.

Returning to Chirico, Fyana is relieved to find him still asleep, but he wakes when she begins to cry. Asking about what happened, Chirico is shocked to learn of the new foe: the space ship TELTAIN, on which his personal war began so long ago, and on which his most hated enemies reside. Struggling angrily out of his seat, he is restrained by Fyana but demands that she let him go to fight. Still weeping, she holds him down, and the strain is enough to wear him out. Chirico sleeps again.

The planet now fills the viewscreens of the ship, and TELTAIN buzzes with activity. Knowing the full status of Chirico's vessel, Futtor orders the attack to begin, and a new barrage of missiles is launched which inflict massive damage to the mysteriously-defenseless battleship.

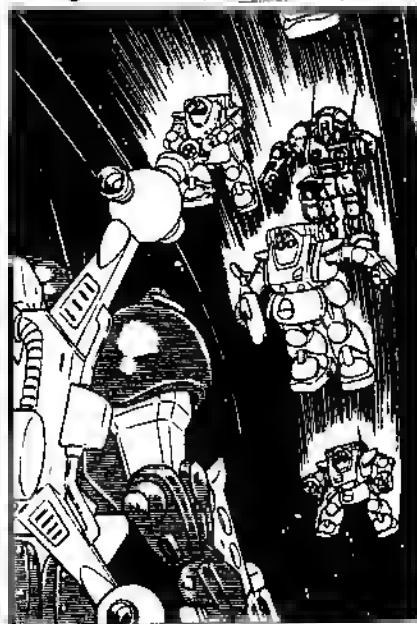


The power on the giant ship goes out, ending Fyana's brief attempt to radio Ypsilon, and the giant vessel begins a long, slow descent to the surface below.

Futtor and his men order A.T.'s made ready for launch, and after a warning from Ypsilon not to underestimate Chirico, the next phase of the attack is begun--Standing Tortoises equipped with space-assault boosters descend on the ship to ferret out the enemy.

As the new A.T.'s move into the falling battleship, Fyana leaves Chirico once again to find a Scopedog, and the battle begins anew! Zooming in and around the twisting corridors of the vessel, she holds her own against the Secret Society's troops. Calling out hopefully for Ypsilon to hear her pleas, she fights on as the mountains of the planet pass frighteningly close beneath the descending ship.

Reports of the battle reach TELTAIN's bridge and Ypsilon decides the time has come to join the battle himself. Boarding his Strikedog, he joins the next wave of Standing Tortoises that launches for the now-smoking battleship.



Moments after his group lands, a tremendous explosion billows out from the ship, and Fyana's Scopedog emerges, weapon drawn. The two Perfect Soldiers stare at each other for an endless, powerful moment. Fyana begs Ypsilon to leave her in peace, but he refuses. He wants her back, and offers to spare Chirico's life in exchange for her.

"I don't care about myself," she cries, "just save him!"

Angered by her refusal, Ypsilon opens fire and launches into the air for a vicious dogfight against his former teacher.

Aron and Guran observe the conflict with interest, still monitoring Ypsilon's brain waves. They are dangerously high--and any imbalance in his emotions will damage his performance as a Perfect Soldier.

Grappling Fyana's A.T. in midair, Ypsilon holds her in a gridlock and raises his gun to her cockpit. He has won. And as Chirico begins to stir in his bed, the victorious Invasion force carries Fyana away. Ypsilon shouts an order to TELTAIN, and a final barrage of missiles wafts toward the crippled battleship, enveloping it in smoke and flame.

Horrified, Fyana wrenches free of her captors and jets back to Chirico's aid. Outraged, Ypsilon instantly turns to pursue her.

Fyana's A.T. reaches the ship first and enters it, followed quickly by the Tortoises. But as they engage again, the ship scrapes the peak of a mountain--and slams violently into the surface of the planet! All aboard are shaken and tossed by the catastrophe as the vessel grinds to a halt, clouds of dust rising in its wake.

The Tortoises find Fyana again and open fire, finally pinning her in a corner...but before they can react, a second Scopedog joins the fray--piloted by a now-fully-recovered Chirico! Fending off the invaders, he helps a sobbing Fyana to her feet.

"I will fight for you."

"And even if we die," she weeps, "I will be happy if I am with you."

Again grappling with the Tortoises, Chirico now leads the flight, emerging outside to the surface of the ship--and into Ypsilon's gunsights. Raising his weapon, Chirico locks stores with his deadliest

enemy...and the rising sun of the world they have come to floods the scene with rich morning light, heralding the decisive day to come.

EPISODE 33 STRATEGY

Sunlight floods the grounded shell of the battleship as Chirico and Ypsilon to face off. Fyana's Scopedog brings up the rear, and she reminds him of their purpose--they must fight together to live together. Chirico girds himself...and launches his attack on the swerving Ypsilon. The two clash violently while Fyana keeps the other A.T.'s at bay, then they break, pausing momentarily to form new strategies.

Aron and Guran monitor Ypsilon's brainwaves from TELTAIN while it conceals itself far above among a field of derelict spaceship wreckage. They are pleased by the readings. Ypsilon's emotions have now dissipated. He is functioning at peak efficiency, his P.S. instincts now fully unhindered.

Now ready to smash his foe, Ypsilon lunges into another attack on Chirico and their battle continues. Swerving around, Chirico neatly blows an arm off Ypsilon's Strikedog and radios a new idea to Fyana--to return to the control room inside the ship and wait over the engine controls until he signals.

Frightened for him, she nevertheless follows his instructions and re-enters the darkened corridors of the ship, battling more Tortoises as she moves deeper inside.

Back outside, Chirico holds his own against the army of A.T.'s, but when his ammunition runs out, he is forced to flee across the flanks of the ship with Ypsilon in hungry pursuit.

Reaching the control room, Fyana watches Chirico's predicament on the monitors...and as he moves slowly toward the rear of the inert battleship, his strategy becomes apparent. Her hand hovers over the engine switches...but can she do what she must?

Moving almost to the edge of the ship, Chirico turns to see Ypsilon's Strikedog creep slowly toward him. Ypsilon laughs triumphantly--his enemy has cornered himself. Ten-

sion mounts as the P.S. draws closer to Chirico...and the latter takes the impossible way out: turning away from his pursuer, Chirico leaps off the ship, his Scopedog making a long fall to the ground below—past the gaping maw of the engine nozzle and landing roughly.

Glancing upward, Chirico watches as Ypsilon stares furiously down at him...and leaps off the edge to continue the pursuit.

"NOW, FYANA!"

shuddering vessel.

The engines die and the ship settles into the ground. Chirico is safe, but Fyana weeps for what she has done.

"Ypsilon...I'M SORRY!"

Fyana's apology to Ypsilon is genuine. Unlike him, her emotions have evenly balanced her actions. Having been with him from "birth," she feels a very motherly affection for him. This, of course, conflicts directly with her love for Chirico.

by Zanjenel and his staff to locate the new intruders into their territory. More ships will be sent to the planet under complete secrecy while LESLION's captain continues to monitor their progress. His orders will be strict—not to fire unless fired upon.

In TELTAIN's medical lab, Ypsilon recovers from his battle while his Strikedog is rebuilt. Wrapped in bandages, he receives a thorough scolding from Aron and Guran... though he is not seriously injured, he is warned against his obsession...It nearly led to his failure.

In the control room of the now-resting battleship, Fyana gets atmosphere readings that show little oxygen and high heat. This planet is a barren desert wasteland covered with wreckage from the war, which now includes them.

Checking up on Chirico, Fyana is distressed to find him missing from his bed in sick bay. Searching frantically, she locates him just outside the ship hanging from a rope, working intently on one of the ship's engines.

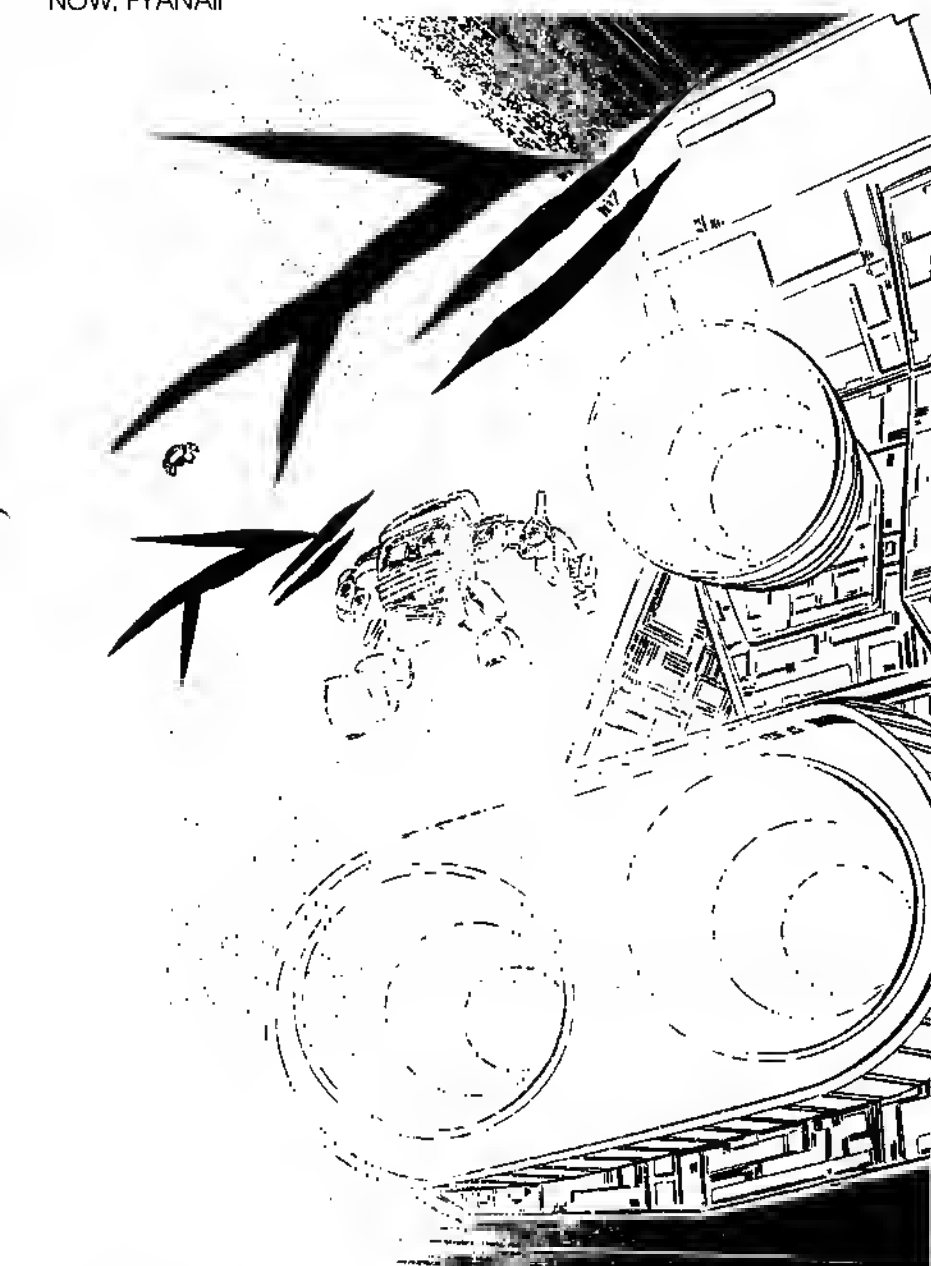
Ignoring her pleas to return to recover, Chirico asks her to activate the valve he has just repaired, and it virtually explodes in his face, knocking him from his perch. The rope, tied around his ankle, stops him just short of hitting the ground, and he swings to and fro over the scorched landscape, getting a full view of demolished structures in the distance beyond...and destroyed A.T.'s on the ground below. This sight brings his war memories back, and he stands in frozen silence when Fyana pulls him down from his pendulum swing. He knows where they are.

"This is Sunsa," he says quietly. "The war was here. Now someone has brought me to this place again."

A sound snaps him back to attention.

"Someone's coming!"

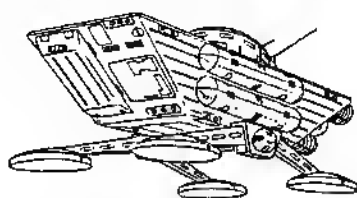
The 'someone' is inside an A.T. carrier sent from TELTAIN to finish them off—an entire legion of Armored Troopers led by Ypsilon himself. Chirico and Fyana rush to the control room to watch as they land and spread out all over the ship. Ypsilon's orders to his men are now absolute:



Horried at what she must do, she cries Ypsilon's name one final time—and stabs the switch to activate the full thrust of the battleship's engines! Caught in the blast, Ypsilon and his men are scorched by flame, their A.T.'s blown viciously away from the

Nevertheless, her emotional stability is strong enough to let her protect the man she holds in higher regard despite the pain it causes when Ypsilon is involved.

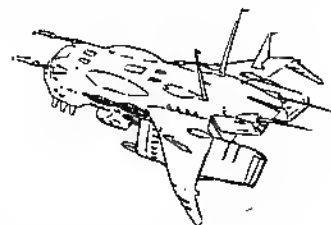
Far away aboard the Balalant Command Satellite, plans are made



to kill their enemy on sight!

But as the Invaders swarm over the vessel to find their prey, a trap is sprung—Chirico has planted explosive charges all over the hull, and now it is a simple matter to detonate them one by one as Ypsilon's army comes into range.

Frustrated, Ypsilon reports the situation to Futtur...but before the commanding officer can act, on even more immediate emergency arises: the LESLION approaches from beyond the field of space debris and could easily misinterpret the direction of their hostilities. Futtur screams angrily at his crew to ready their guns—he no longer cares who gets in his way.



Spotting TELTAIN, one of the Balabant crewmen reports his sighting to the captain, but they must stand fast. The standing order from Zanjenet remains to not initiate a conflict.

Asking for Ypsilon to return for defense, Futtur realizes his P.S. is now caught up in his own entanglement below and that it is too late anyway—for LESLION is now in his sights. Amid claxons and sirens, Futtur shouts the order...and TELTAIN blasts out from its hiding place, missiles and guns blazing. Forced into action, LESLION's captain orders counterattack, and a deadly rain of destructive fire rebounds between the two dreadnaughts.

Below on Sunsa, Ypsilon and his men have moved inside the battleship away from the deadly explosives to the control room...but no one is there now to meet them, and one A.T. pilot steps out of his Tortoise to discover a readout that rapidly clicks off numbers. Too late, they realize the ship's self-destruct has

been activated, and a thunderous explosion rips the deck.

In the A.T. hangar elsewhere on the ship, Chirico and Fyana load two Scopedogs into a vehicle and drive out onto the surface of Sunsa while Ypsilon searches frantically for a way out.

As the battleship begins to tear itself apart, LESLION and TELTAIN break off contact and Futtur receives news from the A.T. garrison. A few men, Ypsilon included, have made it free. Angrily, Futtur orders them to await pickup. The chase must continue.



Driving deep into the desert, Chirico and Fyana ponder their next move. They have escaped their most dangerous foe...but over the ridge ahead of them, clouds of dust rise and huge sand vehicles pull to a halt on the surrounding hills. Sunsa is a planet of death, and dangers await over every dune.

EPISODE 34 PLANET SUNSA

Creeping slowly forward in their vehicle, Chirico and Fyana whisper ideas to each other about how to deal with the drivers ahead of them should an attack be launched. Deciding to brazen it out, Chirico slowly increases his speed, scrutinized the entire time by shadowy figures in the cabs of the other vehicles.

The drivers trade banter with each other about their new prey...and slam their huge sand trucks forward in pursuit. Thrown into a brand new battle, Chirico swerves his own truck as the others surround him and Fyana, blinding them with brilliant spotlights.

Now that their intentions are clear, Chirico yanks his truck to a stop and slips it over a ridge to conceal his next move: leaving Fyana with the vehicle, he jumps into a Scopedog and prepares to meet his attackers in kind.

Just as they have swerved their gigantic rigs around to catch him, Chirico's A.T. leaps the ridge and cuts loose with his bazooka. The others are taken by surprise at the move, and just as the driver of the lead vehicle realizes this is no ordinary foe, the battle approaches a premature end—all the sand vehicles slide to a halt surrounding the Scopedog. Puzzled, Chirico wonders what is happening, and Fyana patches him into the communications net she has been monitoring.

The lead driver, a husky-voiced female, is being ordered to stop fighting by a gruffer voice that is strangely familiar. The voice then asks who the A.T. pilot is.

"My name is Chirico Cuvle."

"Chirico! It's me!"

"Gotho! Where are you?"

"ABOVE YOU," the old man shouts dramatically, and Chirico glances up to see a tremendous, spotlight-wielding junk barge descend from the sky. Piloting the lashed-together spaceship is none other than Bruze Gotho, who happily greets his long-lost companion.

"I knew I'd find you again!"

Floating far above Sunsa, the now-limping TELTAIN undergoes repairs

from its recent battle while a crewman advises Futtur to cease the pursuit--the chase will put them in too great a danger. Deciding on one more attempt, Futtur informs Aron and Guran to watch Ypsilon carefully this time and make sure he does not lose control. One more chance is all they have, then TELTAIN will leave Sunsa for good.

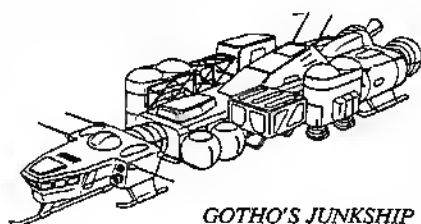
"But what will Albert Kiri say," the two scientists wonder.

"I have a responsibility to this ship," Futtur retorts. "You aren't soldiers--it is your job to analyze Ypsilon. Nothing more!"

Ypsilon, meanwhile, consults with one of the ship's technicians on the recent events. According to the tech, Chirico's recovery from his earlier injuries was phenomenal--at least three times the stamina of a normal human was required to regain his ability that quickly!

Ypsilon is intrigued.

"I knew there was something unusual about him."



GOTHO'S JUNKSHIP

As Gotho's barge floats over the desert at daybreak, he introduces Chirico and Fyana to their pursuers: a group of scrap hounds with whom Gotho has dealt with in the past, led by a stout woman named Sophie. The men laugh about their previous conflict, but she remains reserved about it until Gotho produces a bottle of alcohol to celebrate the reunion.

While the scrap gang revels in the lounge, Gotho leads a quiet Chirico and Fyana into an adjoining room where he radios two more long-lost friends: Vanilla and Coconna, who await their arrival at Sophie's fortress. They radio back ear-splitting cheers that dissolve promptly into an argument.

"Just like old times," Gotho chuckles.

A short while later, the rickety vessel docks in the derelict fortress, and the group disembarks to greet an ecstatic Vanilla. Coconna,

however, is strangely dour. Virtually screaming in delight, Vanilla notices her depression, and asks what the problem is. Coconna is quiet, then glances sharply up at Fyana.

"Nothing," shouts the street girl, and runs out of the chamber. Everyone is puzzled by her reaction except Gotho, who quickly recognizes the jealousy over Fyana. Chirico, as ever, remains grim and unresponsive.

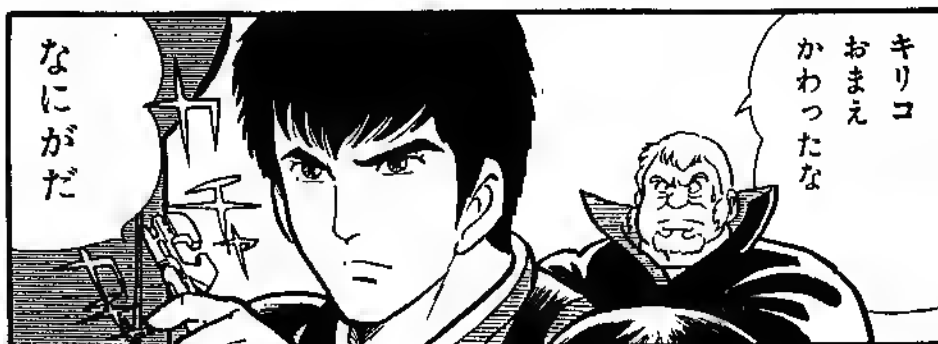
Zanjenei receives news from Sunsa aboard the Batalant Command Satellite. The ship that recently engaged LESLION is a mystery; it appears not to be a Gilgamesh vessel, and no one knows exactly where it came from. But it is more important than ever to conceal these developments, as the final treaty conference with the Gilgamesh approaches, and it is a crucial time for maintaining the peace. Deciding Chirico must have escaped and sided with the scrap gang, Zanjenei alerts his people...they must prepare to destroy the renegades with a single strike.

Deep inside the dark, ruined fortress that provides a hideout for Sophie's gang, Coconna weeps. Looking up at an approaching figure, she is disappointed that it is Sophie instead of her beloved Chirico.

"You really like him, don't you," the older woman asks.

"He doesn't even know I exist. I wish he weren't a Red Shoulder."

Sophie is stunned. Chirico is a Red Shoulder!



Elsewhere in the fortress, the Red Shoulder quietly works on his A.T., while Gotho speaks to him in harsh tones.

"You've changed. You didn't say word to Coconna, but you were the only thing she ever talked about. You don't care about people at all--you're just a fighting machine!"

Touched by his benefactor's words, Chirico begins an argument, but Fyana comes to his defense.

"Don't say those things about him! You don't know what it means to be a Red Shoulder! And not only that, Chirico was also--" she stops, catching her own words.

"What," Gotho demands, "are you going to tell me he is a Perfect Soldier, too? Neither of you know anything about human feelings!"

Fyana's slip of the tongue epitomizes an undercurrent that slowly builds to a revelation in the final Sunsa episode. When Gotho turns to leave, she apologizes to a speechless Chirico, telling him she didn't know what she was saying. But, just as Ypsilon did earlier, she suspects, perhaps subconsciously, that there is something unusual about Chirico that even he is unaware of. When Jan Paul Rochina reappears, however, her suspicions will finally be given voice.

With that, the old man storms out, but a blaring siren catches their collective attention: A.T.'s are coming!

The A.T.'s are TELTAIN's last strike. Led by Ypsilon in his Strikedog, a legion of Tortoises lands and launches an all-out attack on the fortress. Rushing up to the command bunker, Gotho answers a message from Ypsilon.

"We have come for Chirico! Give him to us and we'll leave you in peace!"

Gotho's only answer is an order to fire, and the fortress' guns open up on the invaders. Chirico and Fyana

aid in the battle from their Scopedogs, perched high up on the walls of the tower, but just as the fighting reaches fevered pitch, the guns mysteriously stop firing.

Sophie has entered the command bunker, pulled a gun on Gotho, and barked new orders to her people:

"Stop fighting! Chirico is a Red Shoulder!"

Angrily, the members of the scrap gang throw down their weapons and curse their nalvete...for the Red Shoulders indeed destroyed Sunsa and all their lives.

"We'll give him up," Sophie continues. "What do we have to lose? You suffered because of Red Shoulders! Your families were killed! Who cares what happens to him?"

Coonna receives a firm chastising from Vanilla and Gotho for her earlier slip, for they are now captives of their former allies.

Ypsilon, however, is pleased by this turn of events, and awaits the surrender of his foe while Chirico speaks to Fyana in their hiding place.

"Let me fight him alone," Chirico tells her coldly. "I don't need your help."

"Gotho was right about you—you don't need anyone! You only need to fight!"

Resolutely, Chirico turns away from Fyana, stung by her words, but answers her introspectively as he marches out to meet Ypsilon.

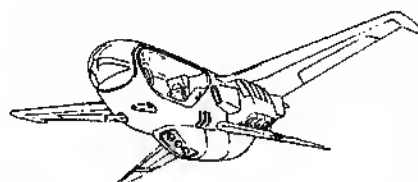
"Everyone has told me I am only a fighting machine. Yet, if I am just a machine, why do I worry about it? Because I am only a human being."

EPISODE 35 CRITICAL POINT

Tension mounts as Chirico approaches Ypsilon. Aboard TELTAIN, Aron and Guran watch the brain wave readings enthusiastically. Ypsilon's emotions are virtually gone now, and he is again ready to launch into battle. The adversaries charge forward simultaneously, locking in a deadly struggle. Suddenly, a hail of bullets slices the air between them, forcing them apart. Fyana has decided to intercede.

But before either can react, a new participant appears: Balalant! Arriving in full force, a Balalant fleet showers TELTAIN with energy beams, forcing it to flee, and squadrons of fighters swoop over Sophie's fortress, strafing it with devastating hits.

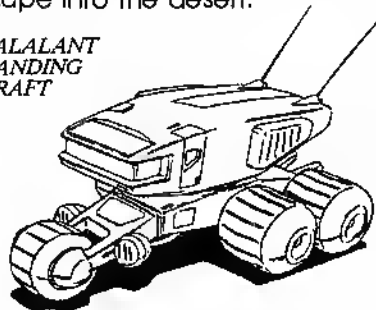
Overwhelmed by the full force of the Balalant Army, everyone is forced to flee as best they can. Gotho



and his companions breaking free to escape through underground tunnels, Chirico and Fyana by loading their Scopedogs into a treaded carrier vehicle, and Sophie by following them angrily in her own sand truck. She wants nothing but to revenge herself on the Red Shoulder...for he has contributed to the shattering of her life once again.

Ypsilon brazenly strikes back at the Balalant attackers, but as they begin to land in full force and move in, even he is forced to flee and escape into the desert.

BALALANT
LANDING
CRAFT



First away from the destruction, Chirico and Fyana lose themselves in the airless dunes. Chirico's eyes are on the landscape ahead of them, but Fyana looks down and catches her breath...though their cabin is fully oxygenated, she has difficulty breathing. The first pangs for her prolonged time away from a Jjirium bath are taking effect. Distracted, she leans on Chirico for support.

"We're alive," he comforts, "as long as we live, there is hope."



Elsewhere, Gotho and his two young friends climb out of a shaft away from the battlezone, frazzled but safe, outfitted with oxygen masks. Coonna is insistent, wishing

to return to Chirico and make sure he is safe.

"We lost everything because of him," the men retort. "Do you really want to put us back in his hands?"

While Sophie angrily follows the tracks left by Chirico's vehicle, her fortress is finally overrun by Balalant troops. The commanding officer radios Zanjenel with the news of Chirico's absence and is ordered to track him down. He and the P.S. must be found without delay.

Some time later, Chirico's vehicle becomes stuck in the sand. Donning their oxygen masks, he and Fyana examine their surroundings for possible dislodging tools. Spotting a rusted-out Balalant tank nearby, Chirico opens the hatch to reveal a skeletonized driver, whose brittle fingers clutch a map of the area. Pocketing it for future reference, Chirico's attention is riveted by the sound of gunfire aimed in their direction. He and Fyana rush back to the cover of their inert vehicle.

"Balalant," she asks.

"No." Chirico glances around the corner to witness a solitary figure approach from hiding: Sophie! He asks Fyana to run to the tank as decoy and remove the pilot's body. Distastfully, she does it—chased by bullets from Sophie's rifle. The older woman runs forward, thinking Fyana is carrying Chirico's body, and is ambushed by the real Chirico, who holds a gun at her head.

"I thought it was you."

Sophie is bound and Fyana covers her while Chirico uses his Scopedog to pry the truck free.

"My entire family was killed by you Red Shoulders," she screeches. "Killing is nothing to you! Why don't you kill me now?"

"If you want to die," Chirico retorts, "I'll be happy to help."

Fyana is shocked by his callousness, but still holds Sophie at bay while they drive deeper into the desert.

Since his argument with Gotho in the fortress, Chirico has become progressively shorter on patience. Sophie's taunts stab his Red Shoulder wounds deeply, and his cold threats, though not entirely true, display somewhat of a wish on his part to become the killing machine. For the time being, though, that wish is only a vocal one.

"Where are you taking me," Sophie demands.

"To your grave," is Chirico's only answer.

A short time later, they set her free and drive on, ignoring her threats to find and kill 'the murderer'.

By nightfall, Chirico and Fyana have found refuge in a domed city in which breathable atmosphere is preserved. Fyana's entire body shivers uncontrollably, and she refuses to eat, instead asking Chirico to hold her and keep her warm.



While they share a tender moment, Sophie approaches the dome under cover of darkness and slips quietly into an unmoving sand truck, switching its power on and activating a beacon.

Suddenly, Chirico is struck by a hopeful idea; peppered all over the map he found earlier are Balant unmanned power stations and a huge, bombed-out city--probably supplied with deposits of leftover Jijirium! Re-energized, he carries Fyana's quivering body out to their vehicle and starts it up--when the scene is abruptly split with the rumble of a Balant Battleship!

Lured by Sophie's treacherous beacon, they have tracked Chirico here and launched a platoon of Fattles to engage him on the ground. Frustrated, he speeds away and is slammed into by the truck Sophie started up.

Pulling Fyana out of the cab of their now-demolished vehicle, Chirico leaps into his Scopedog and they pile out of the back to blast away at their attackers.

The Fattles are dealt with explosively, but Fyana's instability increases--as Chirico cleanly knocks the head turret off one of his opponents, the legs of her Scopedog are blown away, pitching her to the ground. Leaping to her aid, he finishes off the last of the Balant

A.T.'s, forcing the ship to withdraw for reinforcements.

Exiting his A.T., Chirico tends to his fallen lady, still seated inside the torso of her Scopedog. Sophie, meanwhile, struggles to pull the dead Balant pilot out of his now-headless Fatty, and climbs in his place to finish her pursuit of Chirico forever.

Sealing Fyana inside her demolished robot, Chirico flees from Sophie as she chases him in the Fatty, firing wildly with its cannon. He slips into a pile of scrap from which he gets off several shots of his own, but she is too well-protected in her A.T. shell and manages to blow him out of hiding.

Finally cornering the Red Shoulder, Sophie marches relentlessly toward him, gun poised to end his murderous life.

There is a violent blast...

And Sophie's A.T. collapses to the ground, blown to bits by a last, desperate shot from Fyana!

Hurled out of her cockpit, Sophie rises and looks straight down the barrel of Chirico's handgun. Trembling with fury, he holds the weapon on her...but cannot pull the trigger.

Finally given the opportunity to end Sophie's miserable life, he makes the excuse of not being able to kill a woman...when in reality, he probably does not want to become the killing machine and give credence to her ongoing opinions about him.

Instead, he rushes to Fyana's A.T. and pulls her out of the inert hulk. She speaks through rasps...this action was her last, and her entire body now stiffens beyond further use.

"Leave me," she begs, "I want you to live."



Chirico refuses, for hope still remains as long as he can reach one of the stations across the dunes. Building a crude hoist out of scrap, he lifts her onto his back and sets off for them, leaving a furious Sophie behind.

"Murderer," the hateful woman shouts after them, "I will follow you...and KILL YOU WHEN I CATCH YOU!"



EPISODE 36 LOVE AND HATE

The oppressive heat of the Sunsa desert beats down on Chirico, who walks relentlessly forward with a breathless Fyana on his back. Noticing her labored breathing, he stops to replace her oxygen tank with a fresh one and glances back in the direction from which they came. Sophie is there, following them in hateful determination, spurred on by the memories of her slaughtered family.

Rising to continue his trek, Chirico ignores his pursuer, concentrating instead on reaching his destination--a ruined supply depot that may retain a fresh quantity of Jijirium for the weakened Fyana.

Endless hours pass for the three as they trudge onward, but as Sophie's oxygen supply begins to dwindle, she stumbles and blacks out, furious that her vengeance can now never be fulfilled.

Later, however, she wakes to find herself alive, breathing a new tank of air. Rising to her feet, she sees her old one lying next to her and Chirico marching off into the distance. Angrily, she hurls the exhausted tank away. Her enemy is saving her life!

Chirico ducks for cover under an outcropping of wreckage, for a Balant A.T. filler soars overhead, scouting for any sign of him.

Continuing on his way, he reaches a demolished field of rusted-out vehicles. Examining the twisted machinery, he finds nothing and

resumes his journey. Sophie also stops at the wreck, and looks up to realize Chirico has moved on. Rushing through a canyon to catch up with him, she rounds a bend, and there he stands, his final oxygen tank held out to her.

"Take it. Leave us alone."

"Fool," she retorts, snatching the cannister away, "I won't stop until you're dead!"

Chirico turns to leave, ignoring the threat. Later, Fyana asks Chirico to stop and set her down, which he does despite Sophie's proximity.

"Leave me," Fyana pleads weakly, "I am dying. There is no hope left."

This scene demonstrates an effective reversal of positions. Chirico made exactly the same plea to Fyana back on Battleship X when the situation seemed just as hopeless. The fact that his reply now echoes hers shows an even growth between the two. Neither will forsake the other despite the often-overwhelming odds against them.

Taking her in his arms, Chirico holds her tenderly...then looks up at the ridge before them to see a row of rusted handrifles, planted as grave markers against the dusk. Carrying her over the ridge, he comes upon a blasted-out spaceship carcass. But unlike the previous wreck, this one yields more--a manhole lid, which Chirico unearths and pries open to reveal a long, dark shaft untouched by the war.



Leaving Fyana to rest on the surface, he descends into the musty darkness to make a tremendous discovery--an entire cache of unused air cannisters! Gathering up a hefty supply, he shrugs off the bazooka he has been carrying since his escape from Sophie's fortress. Leaving it in the dust, he climbs back to the surface and rushes to Fyana, passing right by a concealed Sophie, who notices the weapon's absence. This is the chance she has been

waiting for!

Refitting Fyana with a fresh tank, Chirico picks her up to leave...and before them stands Sophie, wielding his discarded weapon.

"You've made your last mistake, murderer!"

"Kill me if you want to," he answers calmly, "but let me save her first."

"Why should I save a Red Shoulder's woman?"

"She's done nothing to you. Just let me take her to a jijirium bath, then do what you want."

Grudgingly, Sophie allows Chirico to continue his journey with Fyana in his arms, and follows relentlessly, the gun held ever at the ready. Suddenly, she stops, letting him march on ahead of her. Raising the gunsight to her eye, she watches her enemy steadily through the crosshairs. Her trembling finger tightens on the trigger.

"This time..."

Abruptly, a dune buggy flies over the ridge next to her! Gotho drives it, and Coonna holds on as Vanilla leaps out to tackle Sophie and wrestle her to the ground.

"Idiot," she screams, "you've ruined everything!"

But just as she tosses Vanilla away, a hail of bullets rips into the ground all around them--the Balalant A.T. flier has returned! Chirico leaps into the

buggy with Fyana, Sophie is dragged aboard under protest, and the chase begins!

Chirico directs Gotho toward his next destination, and in moments it looms before them through a gorge; the twisted ruins of gigantic city that stretches the length of the canyon.

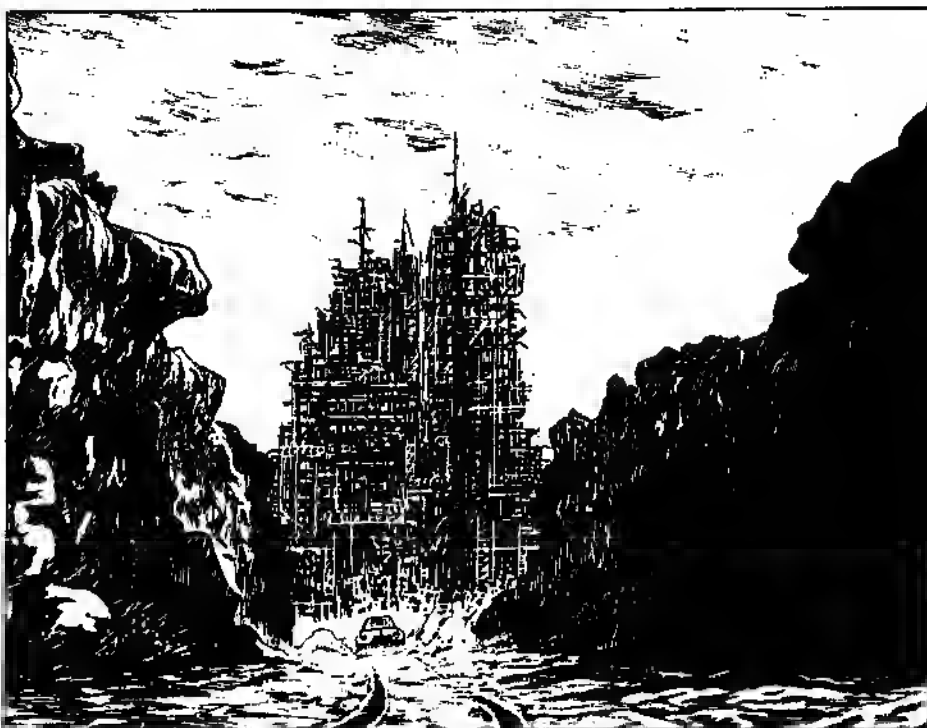
The A.T. flier can no longer pursue them as they drive into the skeletal buildings, so it drops its payload; an armed Fatty. The A.T. fires at them, pitching their vehicle on its side. While the others slip into hiding, Chirico leaps to the wheel and distracts the Fatty, finally destroying it with a well-placed gunshot.

While the flier soars away to its superiors, Chirico rejoins the group, taking Fyana from Vanilla's arms and rushing into a broken-down jijirium plant. Screaming in rage, Sophie tries to race after him, but is tackled by Gotho and Vanilla. Struggling them off with a bazooka shot, she then has her hands full with a screaming, biting Coonna!

The two women strike and tackle each other for long moments, almost completely oblivious to the dumbfounded males staring at them.

"He doesn't care about you," Sophie shouts, "he doesn't care about anyone!"

Stubbornly, Coonna continues to grapple with the older woman, her screams dissolving into loud,



unabashed crying. Finally, she stops fighting, and through tears, her words strike the final blow.

"You're not the only one who's family was killed! Some of us just go on living!"

At last, we learn something about Coconna's history. As the others look on, she lets her grief overcome her, as if it were the first time she allowed it to happen. Sophie is deeply touched by this display of emotion and withdraws, now witness to another who has taken the same wound as she but has healed and overcome to the point where she can express the hurt to others.

Now that the fight is ended once and for all, Gotho and Vanilla walk to Chirico's side. He stands over Fyana's inert body, now bathed in the comforting energy of a Jllrium bath.

"She's going to live," he says.

"So is Sophie," Vanilla answers. "She left in the buggy. She didn't forgive you."

"I understand that. Some wounds take a long time to heal."

Walking away, Chirico watches Sophie disappear into the sunset. His desert walk is over...but the journey is not yet finished.

EPISODE 37 THE CAPTIVE

While Fyana bathes in the revitalizing Jllrium, the others go to work patching up derelict vehicles to escape the inevitable return of the Balalant. Chirico repairs the Faty from salvaged parts as Gotho and Vanilla finish working on a truck. Coconna appears and starts up another argument.

"Chirico needs us! We can't just abandon him!"

"He refuses to leave," Vanilla screams back, "so we've got to forget about him and get ourselves out of here!"

As their argument heats up, they yank off the interfering oxygen masks. Shortly, they run out of breath and calm down when Gotho scolds them to put the masks back on and be quiet.

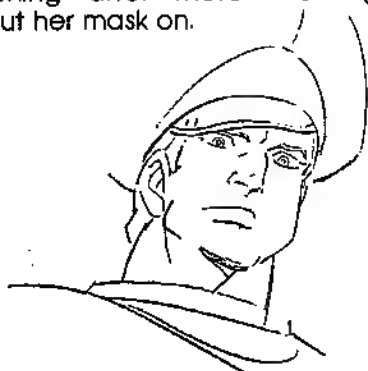
Deciding to have it out with Chirico, Gotho and Vanilla approach him, reminding the silent soldier of the Balalant presence.

"I know," Chirico replies, "that's why I'm fixing the A.T. Fyana is still recovering."

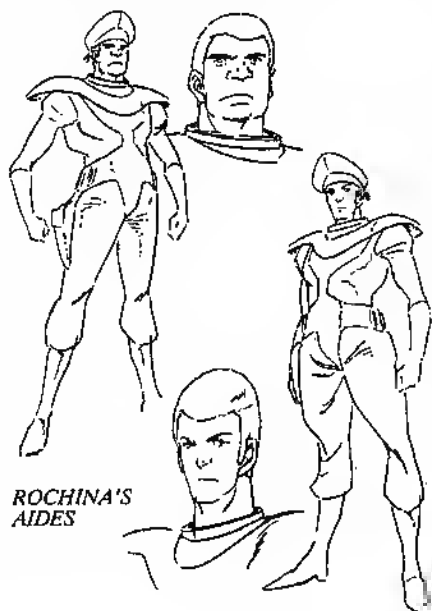
The others argue that they can't just give up their own lives for the P.S. but Chirico hits them with a piece of logic they hadn't considered:

"Where would you go? You should know by now no place is secure. You might as well stay and fight here."

Dumbfounded again, the two men realize their mistake and turn their attitudes completely around by talking themselves into a gung-ho frenzy. Coconna also sees the reasoning after more shouting without her mask on.



From space, a new face reappears: Jan Paul Rochinal. Now in command of LESLION, he is briefed by his subordinates on the Sunsa crisis. True to form, he brings his own ideas into play immediately. He knows Ypsilon will appear again and that only another fighter of inhuman ability can combat him. His men are astonished to learn that he knows where that fighter can be found.



ROCHINAL'S
AIDES

Fyana now rests in bed and speaks to Chirico about their predicament.

"You have decided to stay with me?"

"I will fight for you forever if I have to."

And Chirico will indeed be thrown back into battle soon, for as the incoming Balalant ships enter Sunsa's atmosphere, Rochina barks assault orders...and a hail of missiles arcs toward the ruined city where the group hides. Running to a gun emplacement, Gotho and Vanilla brace themselves for attack--for not long in coming is the second wave, a vast complement of A.T.'s.

Balalant ships descend in extraordinary numbers around the city, and as Vanilla and Gotho are overrun and forced to flee, Chirico decides it is time to join the fray. By beginning an elaborate series of hit and run tactics, he forms a hole in the Balalant attack force, then goes to Fyana and Coconna to lead them out of the city.

But as they exit their hiding place, they are surrounded by Balalant Fatties...and standing amongst them, hands in the air, are Gotho and Vanilla. Helpless, reluctant to further endanger his friends, Chirico surrenders.

Later, the group is escorted aboard the LESLION, now grounded above the canyon just outside the overrun city. Chirico is led away from the others into the cabin of a man he knows all too well: Rochina.

"Chirico. It has been a long time since Kummel."

"Who are you now? Why do you keep following me?"

"I have joined the Balalant to continue my job: hunting the P.S."

"My friends are not involved," Chirico retorts, "why don't you let them go?"

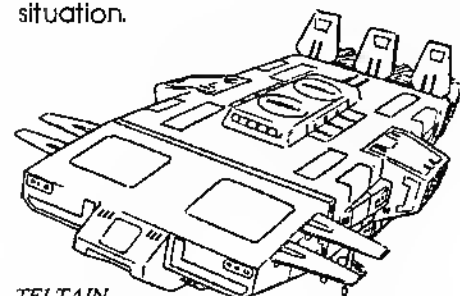
"That will depend on you--I want you to fight Ypsilon."

Stunned, Chirico is taken away to ponder his options. Rochina will wait for his answer.

Reunited with his companions in a cell under constant surveillance, Chirico broods while they whisper bold plans about making a break for the A.T. hangar. Coconna says that Fantam Lady is ready to

help...but he remains silent.

On the other side of Sunsa, TELTAIN drifts in its orbit while Futtur is bombarded with suggestions for his next move. The most sensible idea, of course, is to leave immediately, but Aron and Guran insist on being allowed to locate Ypsilon first. Futtur protests, but grudgingly sanctions their idea. He has tired of the entire situation.



TELTAIN

On LESLION, Rochina marches into Chirico's cell. Inviting cold stares from his captives.

"I've come for your answer."

Puzzled, the others gape as Chirico says he has agreed to Rochina's terms. Ypsilon will come, and Chirico will battle for his friends' freedom.

"Don't trust him," Vanilla shouts, but is stopped short by a loud bark from Jan Paul to keep quiet.

"I will keep my word," he promises.

Night falls over the ruins, and a group of A.T.'s moves stealthily through the dark toward LESLION's twinkling lights. Abruptly, they launch a barrage of missiles into the nearby Fatty patrols that detonate loudly, waking Rochina from his rest.

"Ypsilon. Finally."

Reaching for a tranceiver, Rochina shouts orders to his crew, and LESLION roars back to life, dispatching platoons of Fatties against the invaders and lifting slowly off the ground.

Ypsilon indeed leads the assault in his Strikedog, and as he rushes forward with his Tortoise squad, Chirico surveys the battlefield from his own Fatty.

LESLION climbs slowly into the night sky, and Chirico leaps off, following the action as it moves into the ruins. Both he and Ypsilon make brutal strikes against each other's army, searching all the while for each other.

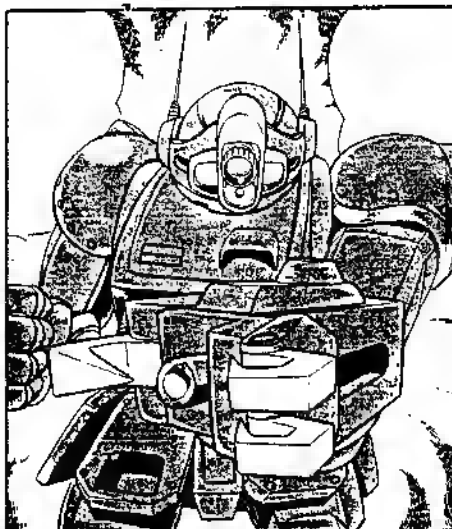
Eventually, Chirico is chased by a

Tortoise into a burned-out chamber in the depths of the city, and turns to see an explosion billow out from the opposite wall. Appearing in the pall of smoke is a Strikedog.

"Ypsilon!"

Instantly recognizing his foe, Ypsilon cuts loose a shot that sails over Chirico's head to demolish the Tortoise behind him. No one will interfere with their confrontation now. As the two face off, Rochina enters with Fyana and a complement of ground troops to witness the events that now unfold.

Fyana gazes down in fear. She is certain only one of them will survive...but who?



EPISODE 38 DARKNESS

Tension mounts in the blasted-out chamber as Chirico and Ypsilon size each other up for what may be the final time...and in the space of a heartbeat, it begins! Ypsilon lays down a formidable barrage from his Strikedog's bazooka, and Chirico deftly evades his every shot as rubble is blown to bits around him. Rochina, Fyana, and the troops watch as the two soldiers grapple in their powerful machines when suddenly Ypsilon gets the upper hand by tackling Chirico's Fatty to the floor.

Just as he prepares to land a killing blow, his attention is drawn to more Fatties that enter the chamber and head straight for him. Ypsilon raises his gun to blow them away, giving Chirico the split-second he needs to squirm out from under the Strikedog.

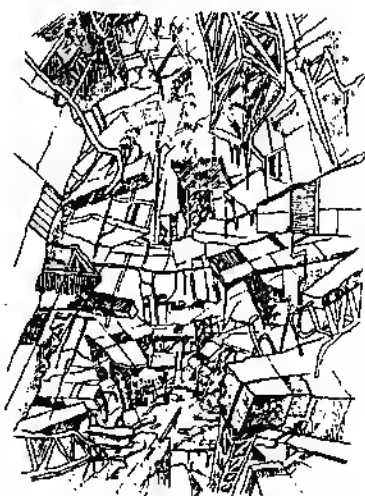
But before they can launch into

the next round, all the damage caused by Ypsilon's heavy fire takes its toll--and a violent series of explosions rips through the entire building. Their platform shaking under them, Rochina's group turns to flee, and Fyana is dragged out, screaming Chirico's name as the floor literally drops out from under him!

The explosions throw debris everywhere, knocking the gunclaw arm off Ypsilon's A.T., and the two enemies plummet into a deep shaft opened up by the tremendous destruction.

Above, Gotho, Vanilla and Coconna watch from one of LESLION's viewports as the explosions tear through the ruins below them. Coconna tears the worst.

Moments later, the dust settles around Ypsilon's A.T., now hundreds of feet below the surface in a dank, dark shaft. Surveying the chamber into which he has fallen, Ypsilon rises in the Strikedog and walks over to an inert machine lying nearby--Chirico's Fatty. But just as Ypsilon moves in close, the Balant A.T.'s gun rises, and its hatch opens to reveal an alive and well Chirico!



"Why don't you shoot," Ypsilon demands.

"What would you do?"

"I would have killed you long ago!"

Rochina and Fyana return to the bridge of LESLION to receive status reports from the battlefield. Gotho wonders if Rochina will bother to rescue Chirico and a call comes in; the fighting has stopped, and the remaining ground troops await further orders. Rushing forward, Coconna grabs the communicator out of Rochina's hand and demands that

they find her Chirico. She is dragged away and Rochina orders the search begun. All they can do now is wait.

Unlike his brash young companions, Gotho is very careful when addressing Rochina. The Merukian-cum-Balant officer is very intimidating and obviously has tight control over the situation. The only anomaly in the plan is Chirico... Rochina can never quite guess his nature, and continues to be intrigued by each new event. He suspects the full truth about Chirico's abilities, though, and all of these arrangements are designed to confirm his suspicions.



As the Fotty platoons begin digging into the rubble, Chirico and Ypsilon continue their heated talk.

"You are my hated enemy," the P.S. growls, "why don't you kill me? Because I am unarmed?"

"No," Chirico says, climbing out of his ruined A.T., "because we have to work together to get out of here." Ypsilon receives a frantic call from his men hiding above, but switches the annoying transmission off.

"Do you think I'd help you?"

"If you want to get out of here you will. That pride of yours will get you killed before I do!" That said, Chirico scales the rocks behind them, looking for handholds to reach the surface with. Ypsilon glares angrily at him, humiliated by the remark.

In one of LESLION's cells, Rochina pays a visit to Fyana.

"No sign of either of them," he says, "they must still be fighting."

Fyana speaks angrily to him; he plied them together knowing of Ypsilon's genetic superiority. It is then that she realizes Rochina must also know something extraordinary about Chirico--for it is now common knowledge that no ordinary human could have lasted this long against a P.S.

As Chirico continues digging his way out, Ypsilon remains seated in

the protective shell of his Strikedog.

"Why do you keep fighting me," he snarls.

"Because you keep chasing me," Chirico snaps back.

Finally consenting to leave his A.T., Ypsilon climbs out to approach him and demands to know why he continually keeps Fyana from the hands of her superiors--for only she and Ypsilon belong together.

"Proto-1 and I are alike!"

"Fyana."

"Her name is Proto-1! Why do you call her Fyona?!"

Chirico stops, frozen by the question. Why DID he call her Fyana? Where did the name come from? Looking back at the furious Ypsilon, he simply has to admit he doesn't know.

"Now," Chirico asks, "are you gonna help or not?"

"I'll help," Ypsilon answers, "but pride has nothing to do with it!"

Above on the surface, the Balant soldiers continue digging, and one takes readings on a sensor-device. They come up positive; someone is alive beneath the wreckage. Coonna jumps up and down in bubbly happiness when the report reaches LESLION's bridge. Rochina only sneers triumphantly.

The report is monitored aboard TELTAIN. Aron and Guran speculate as to how Ypsilon might dig himself free, and Futor Issues orders for help to be sent. They dare not leave Sunsa without their P.S.

Far below, Chirico scales the shaft toward the surface and reaches an alcove just below the building in which he fought Ypsilon. Turning around, he offers a hand to his foe, who refuses to accept any aid in his own climb.

Struggling up into the rest area, Ypsilon stops to catch his breath, eyeing his enemy dangerously.

"You are going to die very soon...but I want to live because of Proto-1! She belongs with me, not an ordinary person!"

Chirico looks him squarely in the eyes.

"There's nothing special about you, Ypsilon. You were bred to fight, but you're nothing more than a human like me."



This is the cardinal insult--and Ypsilon's voice rises to a raspy tremor when he gives his answer.

"I am a Perfect Soldier! I am the only one with the right to kill! You are nothing but a normal human--you dare criticize me?!"

"It won't help your air supply to get excited," Chirico replies, deadpan.

His rage spent, Ypsilon leans to the floor, smirking at his enemy.

"I do see one similarity between us," he giggles tensely, "we both have the strength to go on fighting."

A rumble Issues from above, and they brace themselves as dirt and rock cave in around them, revealing a spotlight that streams down from above. Chirico's name is called--the Balant have broken through.

Dust fills the chamber and Ypsilon prepares to run but hurls one final comment at Chirico.

"I'll find you! You'll never be safe from me!"

"Fine. I can't seem to get rid of you anyway."

Climbing to the surface, Chirico rejoins the Balant soldiers, admitting to them his foe has escaped. And nearby, Ypsilon slips into the darkness, rejoining his men and climbing into a fresh Standing Tortoise.

As they trade plans, they are spotted and fight their way to a waiting A.T. carrier sent from TELTAIN to pick them up. Chirico watches it disappear into the night sky, wondering how soon they will fight again.

He meets Rochina at LESLION's gangway to report the loss.

"You made a promise," Rochina barks, "when will you battle him again?"



"Soon enough. Now get my friends out of here."

Chirico visits Fyana in her cell aboard the ship. Weeping in relief, she holds him tightly, thankful that he still lives.

"The fight isn't over," he tells her.

"Why don't you end it? Why drag it on?"

"It can't be stopped until one of us wins. But our next battle will be the last."

An ancillary vessel launches, carrying Gotho, Vanilla, and Coonna away from the war. Sadly, they wish their friend luck in what he must face...and wonder if they will ever see him again.

Gotho, Vanilla, and Coonna are genuinely touched by Chirico's predicament. Knowing of his ability, they believe that he came back just to see them safely away from the battlefield, and this redeems him in their eyes. He fights on, but he is no longer simply a killing machine.

EPISODE 39 PERFECT SOLDIER

On the bridge of TELTAIN, still in Sunsa's orbit, Futtur shouts at Aron and Guran, demanding that they do something to end the non-stop battle they have been in since their arrival here. Ypsilon has not had a chance to recuperate, yet they insist that hostilities be allowed to continue until they play themselves out.

"If we lose Ypsilon," Futtur says, "we

lose everything!"

"No," the two scientists reply, "the timing is very important--he must fight Chirico again soon and we must observe."

"I have a responsibility to my superiors," Futtur demands.

"And we have a responsibility to Ypsilon. He will win."

Below, LESLION floats slowly over the surface of the dusty planet, and Rochina approaches Chirico, who works diligently at a computer in the A.T. hangar. Chirico is programming his robot's mission disc with everything he has learned about Ypsilon's abilities...it is imperative that the disc is fully programmed for their next battle.

"Why don't you tell me where you'll fight him," Rochina asks, but Chirico simply tells him the time has not yet come.

"You don't care who wins anyway," Chirico says. "What do you really want?"

"What else is there," Rochina asks.

Dissatisfied with the answer, Chirico nevertheless returns to his work, still not convinced that Rochina is telling everything he knows.

On TELTAIN, Ypsilon bathes in jirium energy, determined to make this battle the last one.

Aron and Guran watch, admiring the perfect human.

On LESLION, Fyana approaches Rochina on the bridge during a quiet moment, asking him to stop the forthcoming event.

Rochina is resigned to his answer.

"There is nothing I can do. They must fight. I wouldn't stop them if I could."

"All you want is to study Chirico? You don't care at all who wins!"

"Isn't that what you want, too? Finding out about him is all that's important now. This is his fate."

She goes to Chirico in the hangar, and they hold each other comfortingly for what may be the final time.

"I'm afraid," she says.

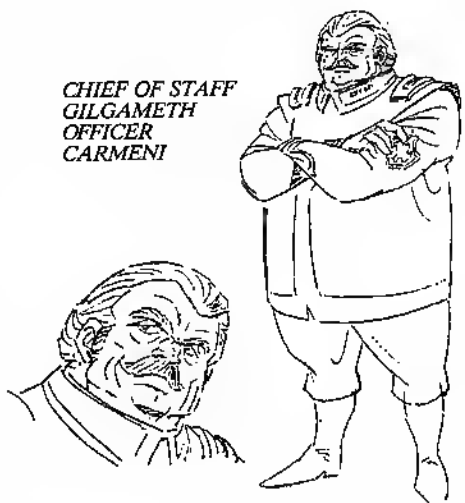
"Don't worry about me. Rochina has everything under control." He looks thoughtfully at her. "Ypsilon told me he only wants to live because of you. His loneliness makes

him fight. There's nothing I can do to prevent it."

On TELTAIN's bridge, Futtur is taken by surprise when an A.T. carrier launches toward the planet--Ypsilon pilots it and has left in defiance of his order. Eager to see what will unfold, Aron and Guran quickly follow in their own landing craft...it has begun.

But the ships orbiting Sunsa are not the only witnesses to this momentous event, for in a distant Merukian base, Battentain is called into a private meeting with Carmen, Gilgameth Chief of Staff. Carmen has all the information about Rochina's recent defection, and Battentain is stunned by the news.

CHIEF OF STAFF
GILGAMETH
OFFICER
CARMEN



"I never knew what was on his mind," Battentain admits, "he was that way. I could never figure him out."

But Carmen demands that he do something--for if Rochina is allowed to go unchecked, Battentain's political standing will be damaged; not to mention the armistice agreement with the Balant.

Shortly thereafter, a massive fleet of Gilgameth warships receives new orders; Rochina will now be targeted for capture...the security of the Astraglus Galaxy may depend on it.

On Sunsa, the pace picks up as the battle approaches. TELTAIN and LESLION begin to converge over the surface of the planet, each preparing to engage the other. Chirico's A.T. is made ready as Ypsilon's carrier is spotted. The sight of the battle will be Shigley Crater, a vast circle of rock that forms a natural arena for the two warriors.

Chirico descends to the surface



and approaches in his A.T., slotting the mission disc with which he will defeat his enemy. All is silent as he scales the edge of the crater, followed by two Fotties and a Baialant landing craft that contains two of the most important personages involved: Rochino and Fyana.

But their progress does not go unmonitored, for a metallic sphere floats nearby, observing the battlefield for Aron and Guran, whose ship sits on the opposite side of the crater.

Topping the ridge, Chirico glimpses the first sign of Ypsilon's presence...TELTAIN's A.T. carrier waits silently on the ground below. But as Chirico approaches, not a move is made.

Aron and Guran watch attentively; it is Ypsilon's way.

Long moments pass...

And the carrier suddenly erupts in a shower of smoke and flame, out of which flashes a devastating barrage of gunfire! Chirico lunges out of the way, rising to see a fresh new Strikedog emerge from the pall of smoke.

"Very good, Chirico," Ypsilon comments. "you should have been dead already. It will be a pity to kill you...you're the only one who can fight this well."

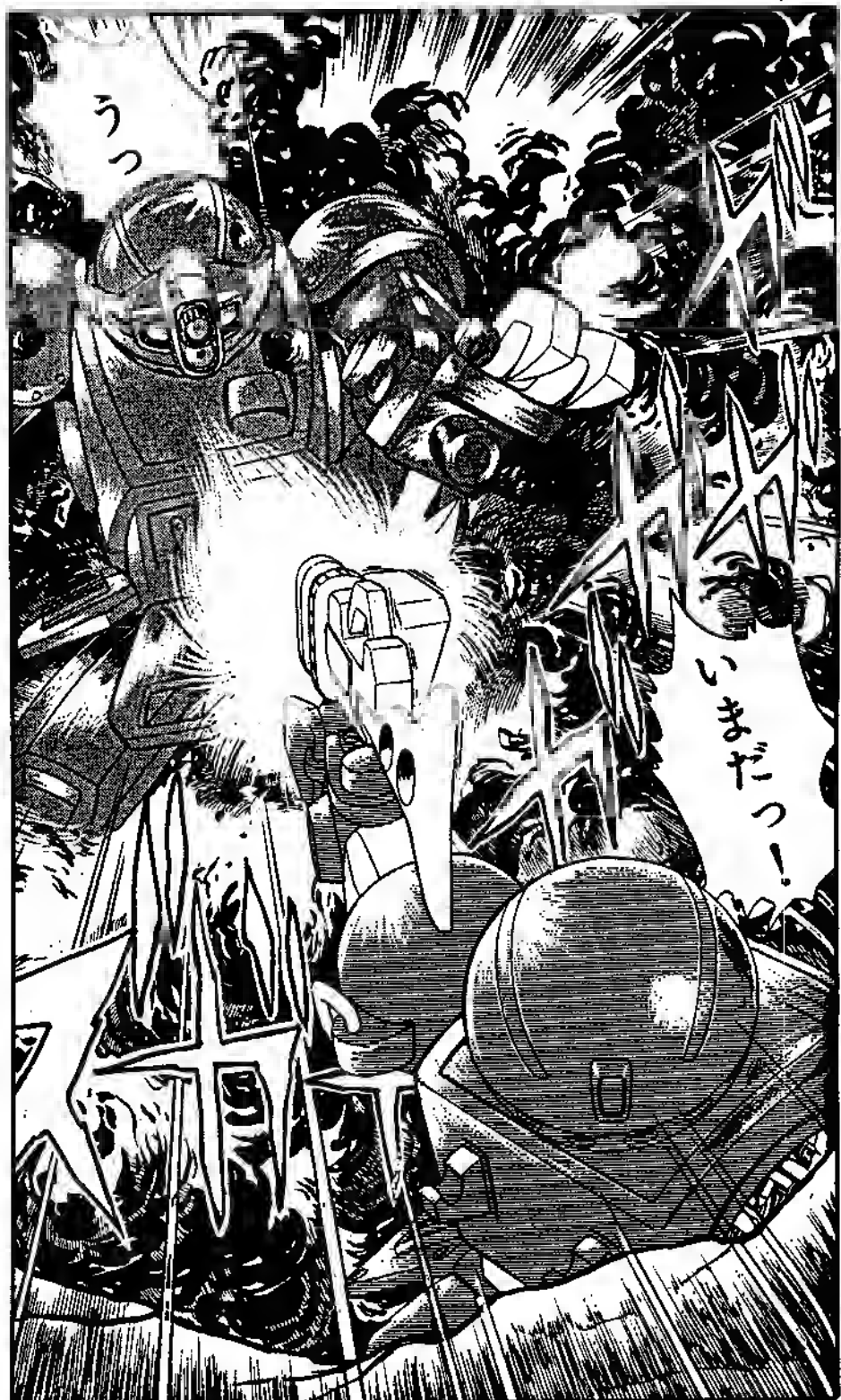
With that, the two lock in deadly combat, throwing every possible strike at each other...and Chirico is astounded, for his mission disc is working perfectly, giving him each subtle nuance of Ypsilon's style.

At this moment, Chirico knows his foe intimately. He can see every move before it is made. He can win.

But, before long, his Scopedog is hit, swaying the favor of the battle to Ypsilon. Chirico is hidden in a thick cloud of smoke, and all is silent.

Ypsilon steps forward, certain that he has won...

And out of the smoke, Chirico



fires, shearing an arm neatly off the Strikedog and staggering his foe so he can launch the next attack.

"I see now," Rochina shouts. "Chirico is a Perfect Soldier!"

Fyana catches her breath. Can it be possible?

"But he never needed jijirium!"

"That's not the important thing."

Rochina tells her excitedly, finally sure of Chirico's true nature. "For him, it is ability!"

Shocked, Fyana realizes the truth. There is now no question in her mind: Chirico is a natural P.S! As if propelled by destiny, she leaps out of the landing craft to enter the battleground.

Outside, the two Armored Troopers clash destructively, each targeting the other with high powered fire. Chirico lines up the Strikedog in his sights, confident in his aim...

And the shot connects! Ypsilon is hurled back by a vicious string of bullets that slice through his body with such strength that the entire Strikedog is thrown to the ground.

Chirico has won!

But as he approaches to end the battle at last, another stream of gunfire digs into the ground between them; Fyana has commandeered a Fatty and halted the destruction.

"Fyana," a frustrated Chirico shouts, "don't interfere now!"

"I don't want either of you to die," she cries. "Ypsilon is beaten! Stop the fight!"

"Why?!"

She takes a deep breath before giving her reason.

"CHIRICO! YOU ARE A PERFECT SOLDIER!"



Stunned, Chirico stops in his tracks, disbelieving.

"That's impossible. I only won because of the disc." As if to demonstrate, he pops the disc out of its casing. It now fizzles and sparks, burned out long ago while the fight still raged.

"The disc doesn't matter," she insists. "no normal human could react to a P.S. that quickly!"

A chilling wind winds through the crater. Ypsilon lies motionless against his Strikedog, looking up weakly at Chirico and Fyana.

"You won," he tells his foe, "now I know the truth about you."

Chirico is insistent.

"I am not a P.S.I. It's not possible!"

"You have to be," Ypsilon rasps. "I could not die...knowing I was killed by a mere human..."

There on the sand before them, Ypsilon's troubled life finally ends, and peace comes to the bloodied features on his tortured face.

"Ypsilon," Fyana weeps. "I may be the one that killed you."

Some time later, LESLION leads its Balalant fleet away from Sunsa, and Rochina watches with Fyana as a tiny ship launches away into the void.

Piloting the vessel, Chirico looks toward the cold stars. Rochina's final words to him echoing in his mind.

"Chirico...you are a P.S.I. You can find the proof. I will care for her. Go. Learn about yourself."

Sunsa disappears behind Chirico as he wonders what awaits him on the world that contains the secrets of his past...Quent.

EPISODE 40 COMRADES

A recap of events on Sunsa from the fighting on Space Battleship X through Chirico's dramatic march toward Ypsilon from Sophie's embattled fortress.



ARMORED TROOPER VOTOMS

装甲騎兵

ボトムズ

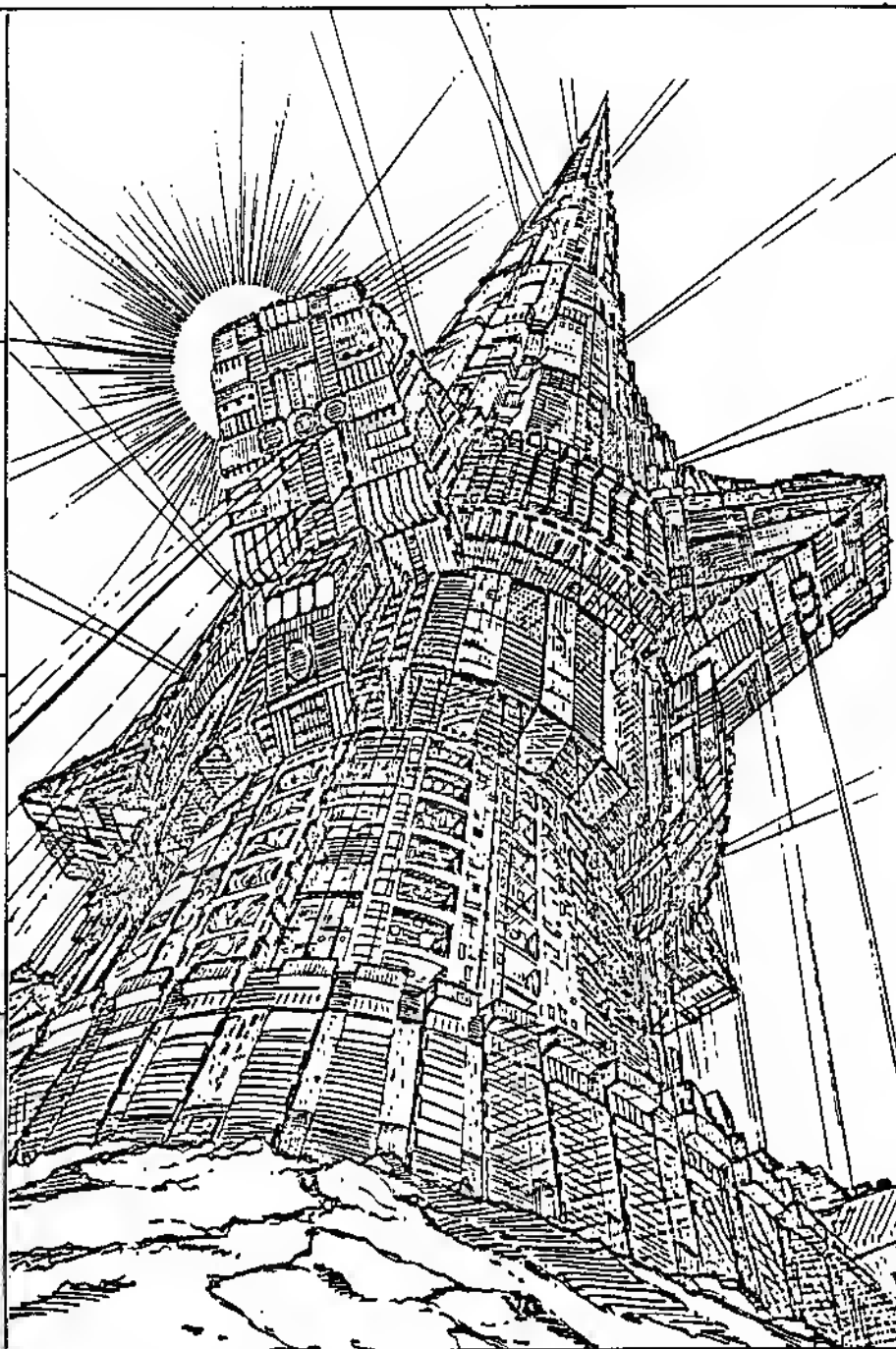
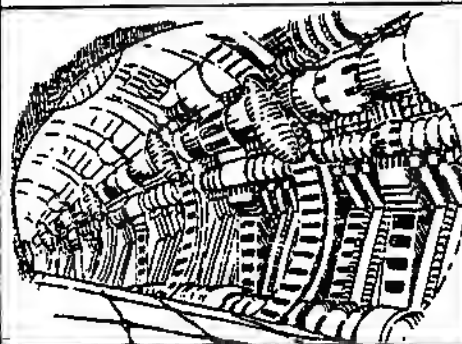
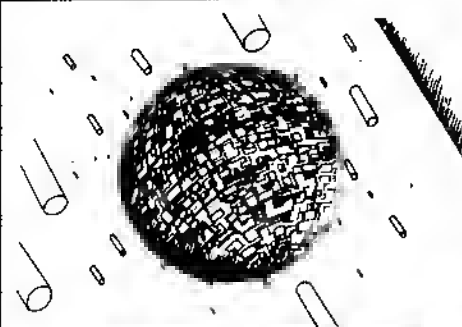
VIEWER'S GUIDE PART 7

QUENT

EPISODES 41-52

The flavor of the series changes dramatically when Chirico makes his way to Quent. Hardcore mecha and knock-down, drag-out skirmishes give way to expanding mystery and intriguing mysticism. As Chirico draws closer to Wiseman, however, every major faction comes together for a climactic confrontation that precedes the largest, most devastatingly significant event in the history of the Astragius Galaxy.

Through it all, Chirico remains at the vortex, and when the Wiseman saga reaches its peak, his companions must face the greatest test of their lives. This is the culmination of Chirico's quest for the secrets of his lost past, and many different storytelling elements are effectively combined to bring VOTOMS to its epic conclusion.



QUENT SOCIETY

After uncounted millennia, Quent has become a rough-hewn world of rock and desert. Once the greatest developer of high-technology in the galaxy, the only descendants of that ancient time are the Quentmen, who live in scattered tribes all over the planet. They are a living legend, supreme physical specimens, often taller and more muscular than ordinary humans. They retain a formidable intellect as well, but most choose not to involve themselves in the affairs of other worlds, although a few offer their services as mercenaries in the battlefield as Shako did in Kummén.

Living out their existence in the caves and valleys of the Quent desert, they are almost devoid of modern culture, and do not even know their own numbers. This strange juxtaposition is directly linked to a critical event in Quent's past that is remembered in the fearful tribal lore of the villages.

There is a mystical quality inherent in the Quentpeople as well, particularly in the women of Shako's tribe, who are granted access to mysterious, forbidden areas of Quent's underground. Unbeknownst to all, the root of their fears lies beneath their own feet, and the events that transpire in these episodes bring it to the forefront.

GOMOL QUENTMAN
(MERCENARY)



TYPICAL VILLAGE



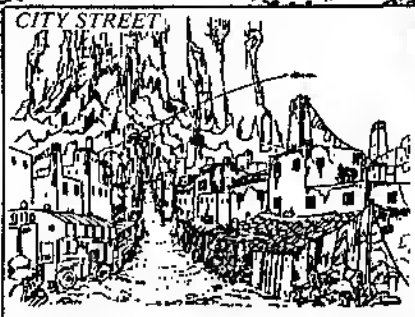
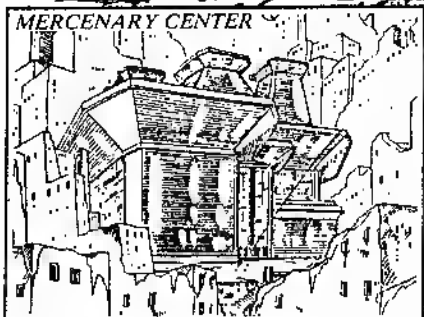
MEDITATION CAVERNS



GOMOL CITY

The only structure left standing from the old Quent culture, Gomol was once a shining city of sophistication, but over the centuries it has deteriorated and been transformed into a village for wanderers and transients, not to mention a Gilgamesh army outpost which holds the only military-related jurisdiction (and non-tactical at that) on the planet.

Although they no longer live in Gomol, Quentmen are still highly respected there, and always obeyed when they have needs that involve the city. The upper segment of the city is a forbidden area, and is said to contain remnants of old Quent technology.



QUENT HISTORY

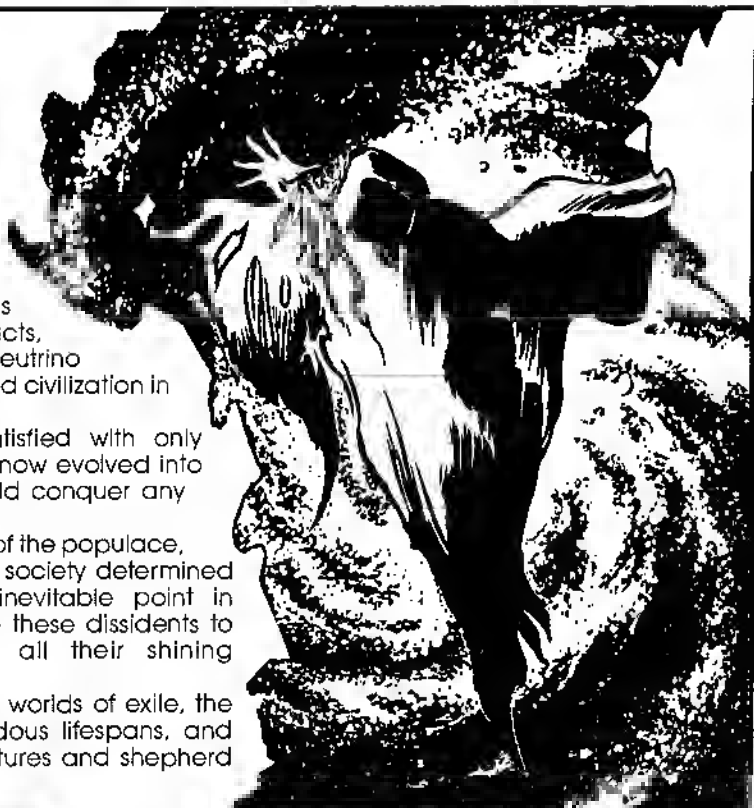
Symbolically located in the center of the Astragius Galaxy, Planet Quent's heritage planted all the seeds that affected all the worlds caught up in the Hundred Year War.

3,000 years in the past, Quent's society reached a technological peak in its existence. Its greatest sciences were founded on antigravity and teleportation, which allowed the Quent citizens to mass-export their world's valuable products, including super-conductive computer chips and neutrino lasers, which made them literally the most advanced civilization in the galaxy.

Some of the populace, however, were unsatisfied with only cerebral superiority, and proposed that they had now evolved into advanced physical beings as well, and thus could conquer any planet they desired.

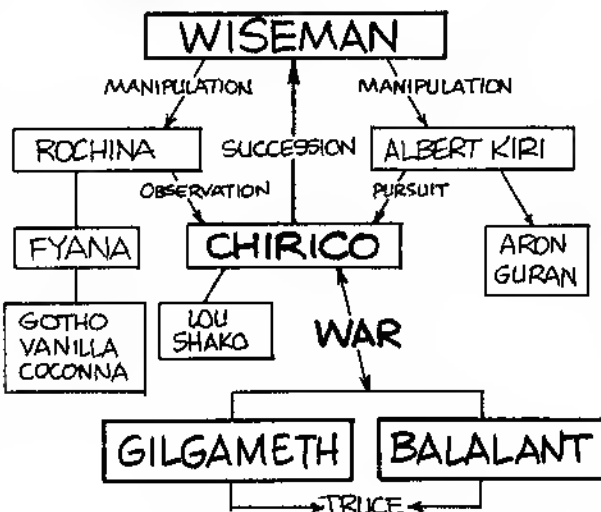
This suggestion created great fear in the majority of the populace, and when the greatest philosophical minds of the society determined this warlike ability was both a natural and inevitable point in overdeveloped evolution, it was decided to exile these dissidents to other, more primitive worlds and abandon all their shining technological achievements.

Although they lacked the ability to escape their worlds of exile, the "Quent Mutants" had the advantage of tremendous lifespans, and were able to deify themselves to the primitive cultures and shepherd them into their own advancements.



ALIGNMENT CHART

These are the positions of the cast as the series nears conclusion and the climax is reached.



Almost 2,000 years after their exile, the mutants were now able to make spaceflights back to their homeworld, but when they returned to Quent at last, they found no great technology, only simple desert-dwellers who had abandoned their culture.

Some of the Mutants were beginning to die off by this time, so they pooled all their knowledge and will into a gigantic, underground computer which was named WISEMAN.

Far more than a simple storage machine, Wiseman was capable of independent thought. Still driven by the Quent Mutants' desire for Godhood, Wiseman realized that to subjugate an entire galaxy, he would need a human symbol to which his followers could respond.

Following the original determination of the Quent philosophers, Wiseman set events into motion by influencing the Gilgameth and Balalant sides of the galaxy separately and creating the proper circumstances to touch off a large-scale war.

It was Wiseman's hope that with war would come improved technology and, subsequently, improved human evolution. Over the next 1,000 years, Wiseman watched and waited through three major galactic wars for a perfect human to appear and serve as his God symbol. Now, at last, his waiting is almost over...



LOCALES

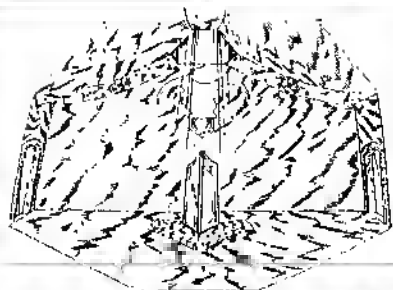
GOMOL CITY
MERCENARY
CENTER—
QUENTMAN'S
CHAMBER
(episode 41)



GOMOL CITY—
MARKET DISTRICT
(episode 41)

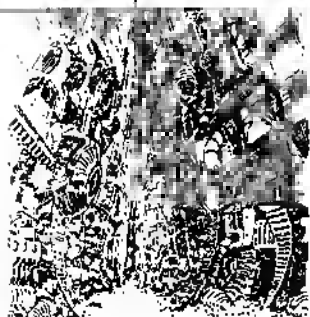


GOMOL CITY
MERCENARY
CENTER—
SIGNALLING
OFFICE
(episode 44)



LOU SHAKO'S
VILLAGE
(episode 43)

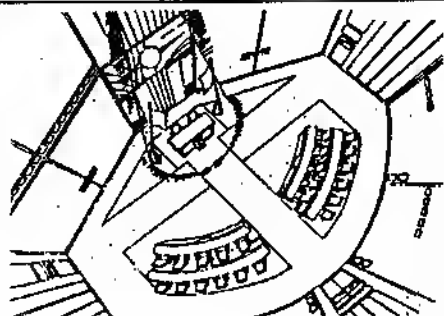
QUENT
UNDERGROUND
COMPUTER CHIP
PLANT
(episode 43)



GILGAMETH/
BALALANT
SUMMIT STATION
(episode 49)

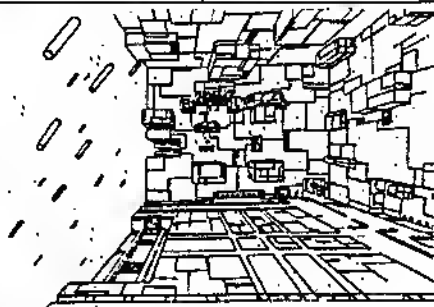


WISEMAN
GLOBE—
CORRIDOR
(episode 48)

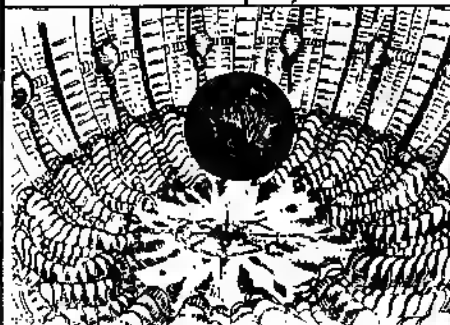
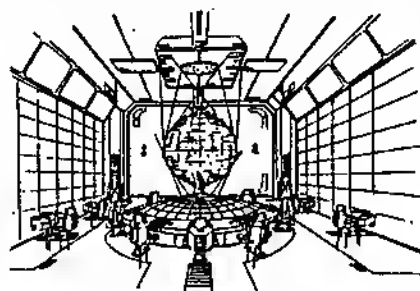


SUMMIT STATION
COUNCIL
CHAMBER
(episode 49)

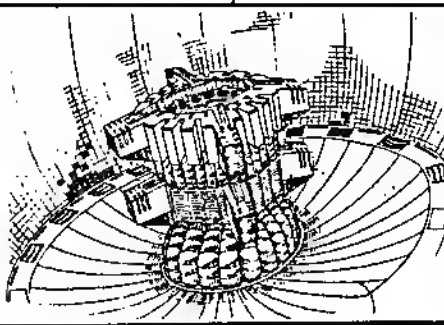
WISEMAN
GLOBE—
HANGAR BAY
(episode 49)



GILGAMETH/
BALALANT
COMMAND SHIP
BRIDGE
(episode 50)



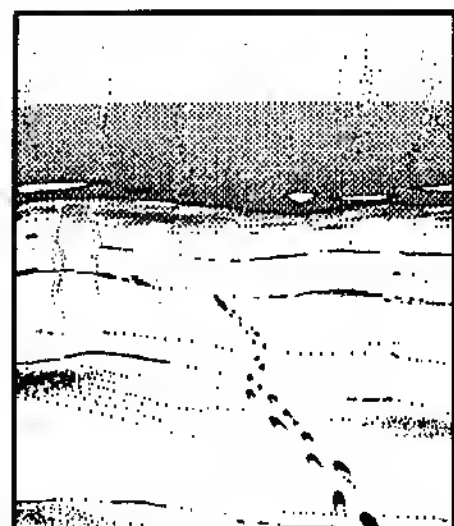
UPPER GOMOL
CITY— CONTROL
ROOM
(episode 50)



WISEMAN
CORE CHAMBER
(episode 52)

EPISODE 41 QUENT

Harsh sunlight beats down on the still form of a Balabant spacecraft that has crash-landed in a vast desert. Nearby, footprints lead away from a discarded A.T. pilot's helmet.



Chirico Cuvie staggers across the shimmering dunes. Ahead stands the hazy outline of a city, but it soon fades into a mirage. Chirico is no longer on airless Sunsa, but the desert of planet Quent is just as cruel. He collapses in the sand with Rochina's last words echoing through his tortured brain.

"Go to Quent. There, you will find your past. You are a Perfect Soldier..."

"Wrong." Chirico shouts back. But as his vision fades, he wonders if all his battles to reach this world have been in vain.

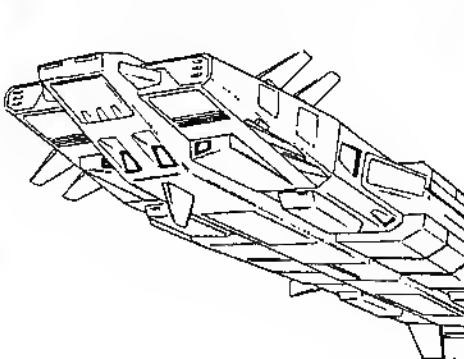


Some time later, however, he opens his eyes again to find a bemused old man leaning over him. The man introduces himself as Gekko, and as Chirico voraciously drains a nearby canteen. Gekko scolds him for trying to cross the desert alone.

"After all, only we are allowed to do that."

Rising to look out a window, Chirico realizes he is in one of several huge vehicles in a merchant caravan. Ahead looms a gigantic, mushroom-shaped structure which Gekko refers to as Gomol, the only city on the entire planet.

Far above orbits the command cruiser of the Secret Society, a vessel similar to the TELTAIN, but run by the cartel's founder and master, Albert Kiri. He addresses Aron and Guran, who wait eagerly to begin their expedition of Quent.



"You must be extremely careful here. This world has been producing the best fighting men for over 3,000 years. People will continue to come here for their help as long as there is warfare."

Kiri also reminds them of Chirico's danger to their organization now that Ypsilon is gone, but the scientists pay little heed as their dropship soars away.

"They are brave indeed," Kiri ponders, "but maybe they don't know any better."

In a camp of tents set up on the outer borders of Gomol City, Chirico insists that Gekko help him find a native of Quent with whom he can talk. Gekko explains that no actual Quentmen live in Gomol anymore except for one or two representatives in the city's mercenary center.

"They will only respond to someone in need of a soldier, but I might be able to arrange a meeting for you in time."

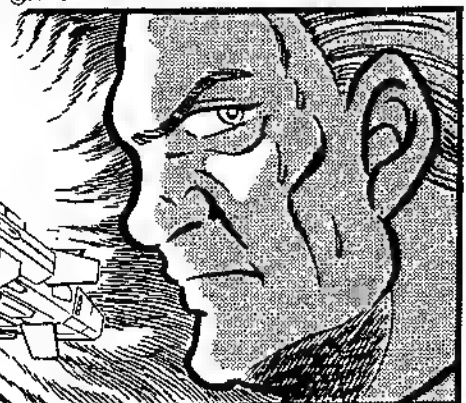
Impatient to begin his search, however, Chirico stalks off, ignoring Gekko's warnings about the number of outlaws and troublemakers here.

"Do as you like," Gekko finally concedes. But, re-entering his tent,

he is confronted with his own warning—a gang of thugs, lead by a brutal man named Hazega, comes on strong, demanding to know about the man Gekko picked up in the desert.

Regaining his composure, Gekko slyly asks what the info is worth to them. Presented with a pouch of coins, he says the man in question was headed into the market district and mentioned the mercenary center.

The goons leave, and Gekko grins to himself.



"Must be big business."

Finding the mercenary center, Chirico marches up to the receptionist and boldly says he will pay for the services of a good soldier. Nervously, the wormlike little man slips away and punches an alarm. Confused by the reception, Chirico makes his own way into the building, and finds a guard with little knowledge of the commotion.

Pulling his magnum, Chirico demands to know where he can find a Quentman. The guard stalls with a clumsy lie while others form a charge against the invader and start shooting.



The former Red Shoulder easily evades them and ducks into a dark room. He turns to face another figure seated behind a desk. This one is different. A Quentman at last.

"I just want to talk," Chirico affirms. "Is this room monitored?"

"I am the only one here," the Quentman answers.

"Do you know about the term P.S.?"

"No."

"Who does? Where can I find other Quentmen? Don't you have a government?"

The tall man explains that although they did once, they are now broken into many tribes. No one really knows the number any more.

"So where do your mercenaries come from?"

"I deliver the messages to them. One will come if he wishes to."

Ignoring a general alert that chimes in over the PA system, Chirico asks the Quentman to do so, but wonders how the signal will be sent.

"By a flresign."

Chirico is surprised. Don't they have any technology?

"We are a peaceful people. You should cross the desert and meet us. Go now."

With that, armed guards burst in and Chirico bolts for the window, deftly lowering himself to ground level and sprinting into the streets. But Hazega's gang watches the entire incident from their truck and pursues him despite their leader's amazement at Chirico's ability.

"If he finds an A.T., he'll have no equal," Hazega mutters, raising a pistol. "But he has no A.T. now."

The truck quickly appears ahead of Chirico in the street and the thugs march toward him menacingly.

"Who are you working for," Chirico demands.

"Someone who knows you from old times. His ship is waiting at the spaceport."

Not willing to surrender his quest now that he has come here, Chirico ducks into an alleyway to escape, but finds himself instantly cornered. Gekko appears above, and Chirico asks for some timely assistance.

"You've already got it. Now is a good time to be captured--trust me!"

Gekko disappears and Chirico turns to face his pursuers, not ready



HAZEGA

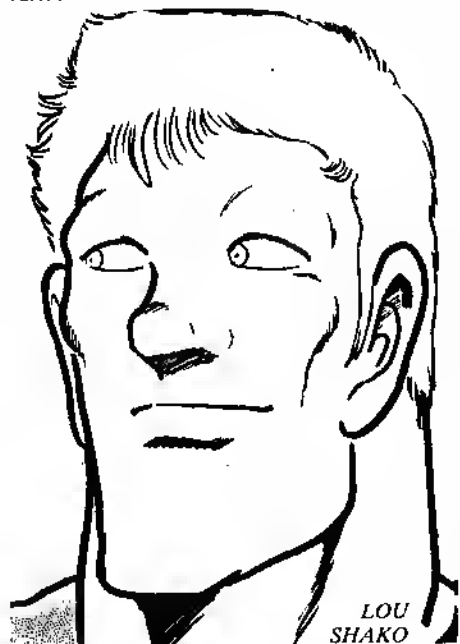
to put his life in anyone else's hands. The fight is intense, but Hazega's gun-loaded with a tranquilizer dart--brings it to a swift end.

Aron and Guran wait at the spaceport for the arrival of their operatives, who have reported the successful apprehension of their quarry.

"That was easier than we thought," one of the scientists concludes. "All we had to do was wait until he was out of A.T.'s."

The gang's truck pulls up, and a bruised Hazega steps out to demand double payment for his troubles, but another vehicle approaches them carrying no less than the mayor of Gomol...and one other.

The mayor orders Aron and Guran to release Chirico immediately. He is the guest of a Quentman, and their word here is law.



LOU SHAKO

Dumbfounded, the captors watch their prize slip through their fingers.

In the mayor's car, Chirico stirs and looks up to see perhaps the most unexpected man of all: Lou Shako!

"The Gomol Quentman called me. All he had to say was one word: Chirico."

Returning to Kiri's ship with the news, Aron and Guran offer that although the situation is now complicated by the presence of a Quentman, they can track Chirico and attack him as soon as he re-enters the desert.

As the sun sets on Gomol city, Gekko sees Chirico and Shako safely away. Shako explains that they will go to his tribe, but admits that he does not know if they can tell Chirico what he wants.

Chirico remains hopeful, though, especially after the miracle of finding his old friend.

EPISODE 42 THE DESERT

In the A.T. hangar of Kiri's ship, the master of the Secret Society addresses squads of his men lined up to disembark in their robots, a company of light-class Zwergs.

"Do not underestimate Chirico. You all know of Ypsilon's fate. You are free to test Chirico's abilities, but no more. The final decision is mine."

Aron and Guran mutter that as long as Chirico lacks an A.T., the chase shouldn't be a problem.

"I doubt it," Kiri replies.

Shortly thereafter, Aron and Guran watch the A.T. carrier launch and descend to Quent and turn to their superior.

"We respect your decision, but being overly cautious could cost us chances. Our men are the very best."

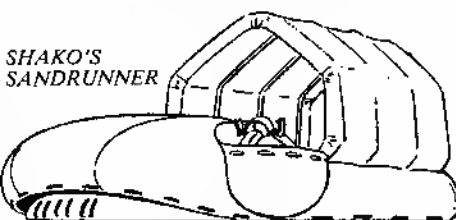
"But Chirico is a Perfect Soldier," Kiri reminds them, "and our data on this planet is very old..."

Morning stretches across the desert and Lou Shako wakes Chirico for the daybreak ritual of seeking breakfast. Using a pair of metal spears, Shako coaxes a



vicious, squidlike creature out of the sand and kills it in front of an awestruck Chirico.

Paring the carcass down to a supply of meat that can last them a month, they take off in Shako's sandrunner over the waking dunes.



"Strange place," Chirico remarks. "What became of Kummen after I left?"

"I don't know," answers Shako, "I returned here right afterward."

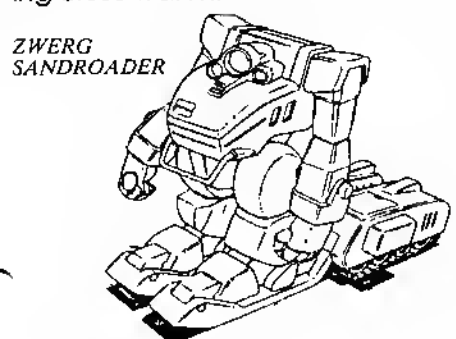
"Didn't like being a mercenary?"

"My contract expired. What about you?"

"It's a long story. But it seems I'm not quite a normal person anymore. Some think I might even be a Perfect Soldier. They'll follow me here sooner or later."

"They're here already," Shako states, explaining that he watched a ship pass low overhead the previous night.

Indeed, not far off, Chirico spots a wake of dust travelling parallel to them. A closer look reveals a group of the Secret Society's Zwergs keeping close watch.



"How big is this desert? Is there anywhere we can hide?"

Shako promises to find them a

likely cave or crevasse.

"How about weapons?"

"I have my spears," the Quentman offers, and at that moment, the Zwergs press their first attack. Shako swerves the sandrunner around them and zooms away.

The vehicle's change of direction is reported to Kiri and the two scientists. Aron and Guran smile, insisting that this proves Chirico has no way to fight back. Therefore, there is no reason to delay a full-scale strike.

But Kiri is apprehensive. After all, this is the territory of the Quentmen.

"Can they shoot at us from down there," Guran counters. "They're only primitive desert people. They threw away their whole culture just to become mercenaries."

"They were once very powerful," Kiri responds. "They once had the power to dominate the entire Astragius Galaxy."

Not wishing to defy his master's wishes, Aron orders the Zwerg pilots to hold all fire until Chirico can be separated from the Quentman, but then they can act on their own.

The chase continues, but Chirico's shouts for Shako to speed up cannot be granted. They must conserve fuel for the long trip ahead.

Some fancy maneuvering sends one A.T. spinning into a crevasse, however, and Shako manages to lose the others for the moment, although at the cost of a working radiator.

Later, the sandrunner descends into another such canyon in which Shako intends to find a Quent village to hide in.

"Would they have any weapons or metal-tracking equipment," Chirico asks.

"None. Quentmen do not use them. We do not fight on our own world."

Word of their lost quarry reaches Aron and Guran on Kiri's ship, but the two keep the report to themselves, instead ordering the search to continue...and giving the men leave to shoot if a 'crisis' arises.

In the canyons, Chirico steers the ailing sandrunner as Shako pushes it along.

"I don't get it," Chirico complains. "Quentmen have been fighting as mercenaries for 3,000 years and still have no weapons, or roads, or communication? This is like a primitive planet!"

"Are you angry?"

"No, it's just so different from what I imagined."

"We can use machines, we just choose not to. Most Quentmen don't even know about a world outside their own."

Suddenly, floodlights fill the canyon--the Zwergs have spotted them and pick up the chase. Shako glances over the area where the village should be, but there is nothing to be seen. He



speculates that it might have been moved or abandoned, and in the moment of distraction, their vehicle is hit, pitching them hard against the canyon wall.

The Zwergs begin to surround them.

"I should have known it was going too easy for a couple of Kumm veterans," Chirico laments.

"Are you giving up?"

"We don't have any weapons. How can we fight?"

"You've really changed," Shako observes. "You never gave up before."

"Disappointed?"

"It's an improvement. So, are you going to surrender?"

"No. This can't be that much harder than the hell of Kumm."

"Ah. You haven't changed a bit."

With that, the two soldiers burst out of hiding. While Chirico skillfully overtakes and commandeers one A.T., Shako sends the damaged sandrunner flying at another, throwing it down into the deep crevasse. The remaining Zwergs are routed and send a report to Kiri's ship.

Outraged at his scientists' zeal, Kiri derides them for daring to start a fight near a possible Quent village. Their claims of 'an accident' are ignored, and they are ordered out of Kiri's sight with another warning about being too careless where Quent is concerned.

"Pity we lost the food," Shako tells Chirico as they drive away from the battlesight in their captured Zwerg.

"Shako..." Chirico starts, "do you think I really could be a P.S.?"

"Well," the Quentman chuckles, "you're no ordinary man, that's for sure."

Eventually, they pull to a halt above a second crevasse and

Shako proclaims that this one contains his own village. Chirico wonders if this place really will tell him about his origins...or is it just a grave called Quent?

EPISODE 43 LEGACY

"A pity," Aron tells Guran in an observation port on Kiri's ship. "Until now, Chirico had no weapons. Now that he's got one of our A.T.'s, the chase will become complicated."

"Stop it! Our master is already too conservative. He is afraid of our lack of information about the planet. Why don't we take care of that?"

"You mean, go down there?"

Kiri steps out of the shadows, having heard it all.

"Then choose your team," he orders coolly, "but remember that Chirico is now in the vicinity of a Quent village. Don't do anything rash."

Meanwhile, Chirico and Shako reach the depths of the crevasse and before them stand a dozen cloaked Quentmen carrying torch lamps. It is perhaps the first time anyone from outside has seen this many in one place.

Shako introduces Chirico to them in the native language, and

Chirico asks permission to stay with the tribe for a time. Acknowledging his request, the leader takes them to their village, a smattering of huts and hovels, some carved out of the rocks themselves.

Chirico and Shako are directed to a particular dwelling that will serve as their quarters. They sit, and the Quentmen file away. In one corner of the room, there is a sudden THUMP that causes Chirico to draw his gun, but it turns out to be only an over-curious child.

"You're probably the first outsider he's ever seen," Shako says, handing Chirico a drink. Chirico takes a sip, indicating the man who brought them here.

"Is he the chief of the tribe? I want to talk with him."

"His name is Tedaya. He's 190 years old. You'd better rest before talking to him."

"I can last two or three days without sleep," Chirico protests, but Shako smiles as the drink takes hold and his companion falls into unconsciousness.

Above, Aron and Guran's A.T. carrier descends through the night sky toward the crevasse. They decide to land a good distance from the village, since Kiri is concerned that the Quentmen may have concealed their weapons in the rocks and might rush to assemble them in the event of an invasion.

"They'd have no reason to fight us, would they," one of the scientists hazards.

"You sound nervous," the other observes.

"I'm just concerned."

While Chirico sleeps, the women of the village file into his quarters and perform a strange ritual. One by one, they circle around him and fill the air with chanting.

Later, Chirico wakes with a start (he has been dreaming of Fyana) and sees Shako sitting nearby.

"What happened while I slept?"

"The women examined you. They wanted to see if you were the modified man."

"What? You mean a Perfect Soldier?"

"Sleep. You will know tomorrow."



Far beyond the Quent system, the Balalant warfleet assigned to Jan Paul Rochina prepares to leave the orbit of Sunsa. Aboard the LESLION, he explains to Fyana where they will proceed to next.

"It has been 36 hours since Chirico would have landed on Quent. He must have learned something by now."

"What will you do with him," Fyana asks.

"Just follow him. All that matters is what he finds there."

Fyana realizes that Rochina hopes for Chirico to learn about his possible origins as a P.S., but why, she wonders, is Rochina so interested?

"I've been following the wishes of a superior mind. I know that now. I've gone from one side of this war to the other, all to follow Chirico. It is my superior's intention."

"Who is your superior?"

"That's what I want to find out."



TEDAYA

Down in the Quent village finds Chirico and Shako stepping out of their dwelling. Aron and Guran, hiding in the rocks above, watch as they approach Tedaya's throne in the village center. Chirico addresses the chief.

"I came to learn about myself. Do you know the term P.S.? Is there a relationship between the P.S. and Quent?"

To Chirico and Shako's mutual surprise, Tedaya answers for the first time in common language.

"If by P.S. you mean the modified man, I only know what I heard from old times. To fear the modified

man. To fear the creator."

"But what about me," Chirico demands, his patience dwindling.

"You might be the one."

"How can you be sure?"

"The women sensed it in you."

Chirico demands proof, ignoring Shako's command to calm down.

"I don't understand any of this! They say you abandoned your culture 3,000 years ago, but Quent still produces technology! What about the computer chips and neutrino lasers that are made here? Where do they come from? Where can I find a real Quentman?!"

"Mage," Tedaya replies. "Speak to Mage."



Later, an apprehensive Shako escorts Chirico to a network of dusty caverns. In cramped pockets that line the walls, Quent natives curl up, seemingly in hibernation, but Shako explains to a nervous Chirico that they are merely meditating.

Down another cavern, Chirico sees a dim light, but Shako calls it a forbidden place.

"That is where the chips come from...but only our women are permitted to go there."

Despite Chirico's curiosity, they continue to a last pocket...the meditation hole of Mage, who appears more ancient than the rocks themselves. If not for his raspy whisper which Shako translates, he might be a withered corpse.



MAGE

"3,000 years ago," Mage starts, "came the end of Quent's golden age. The men who proclaimed themselves Gods said they had 'modified' the rest of society. All others had been reborn at their hands. This sent shock and surprise through the others, who rebelled and killed the 'Gods' and put their bodies into darkness."

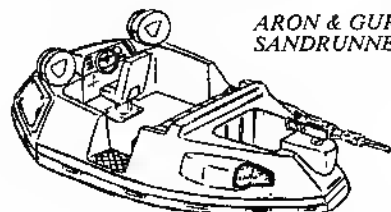
Chirico asks who the gods were, but Mage only shakes his leathery skull.

"Did the Gods try to modify Quentmen? TELL ME!"

But the rest of their talk is inconclusive, yielding no proof of any links. Chirico and Shako leave in their captured Zwerg and

Chirico wonders if the chips could contain some secret...

Suddenly, Aron and Guran burst out in front of them and a new chase begins as gunfire tears into the sacred walls of the caverns.



ARON & GURAN'S SANDRUNNER

Spurred into action, Chirico and Shako flee into the forbidden area known only to the women. The stone walls give way to an artificial corridor of machinery and technology! Covering the floor are millions of the tiny chips that Quent has produced for 3,000 years—seemingly by itself!

Aron and Guran are right behind them, and a barrage of bullets separates Chirico from Shako. Chirico scrambles up a ladder, but is quickly surrounded on a balcony above.

"Our first meeting," Aron gloats, raising his pistol. "Sleep now. When you wake up, you will become someone else."

He shoots, and the tranquilizer

dart launches at Chirico's tensed body...but never hits! Strange energy erupts from the walls of the ancient complex, freezing the action!

Chirico blinks as Aron and Guran vanish from sight, their pistol and dart disappearing with them. Left alone, the air around him saturated with power, he wonders if he still lives...

EPISODE 44 PROHIBITION

Two men appear from nowhere in the Gomol City market district. Shocked, Aron and Guran pick themselves up. Locals run in terror from the two scientists, screaming of ghosts. They stare at each other in disbelief. What has happened?

Kiri gets their report on the command ship.

"You jumped 800 kilometers in one second? I want the details immediately!"

Chirico stirs and rises to his feet in the underground corridors. All signs of a disturbance have passed. But what sort of place is this?

Returning to Kiri's ship, Aron and Guran assess their discovery of Quent's concealed technology. They now have a significant advantage over the Gilgamesh and Balalant armies in data on this planet. Furthermore, they have learned that the upper section of Gomol City is a forbidden area, and could contain even more secrets--perhaps enough to dominate the entire galaxy!

"What do you mean," Kiri demands.

"Teleportation must only be part of it," the scientists begin...

In the depths of the Quent caverns, Mage explains to Chirico and Shako where the invaders were sent.

"Why did it happen," Chirico asks.

"The power protects Quent. It has for many years."

Chirico asks how the two were teleported and where the energy center is, but this knowledge is forbidden even from Mage.

"Are there other forbidden places?"

"Yes. The upper part of Gomol. For many years."

On his ship, Kiri examines the slim data he has on Quent, specifically that 200 years ago, the Balalant army tried to dominate the planet. They disappeared when they attempted to land.

Aron and Guran point out that this has happened throughout history, every time an outside force has attempted to invade the planet.

"So," Kiri states, "the larger armies are afraid to take this treasure, and you want me to try it myself?"

"It's only another type of science we haven't learned yet," Aron counters. "There's no such thing as magic. There must be a way."

Later, the scientists work alone to assemble and record their recent findings.

"You're pushing him," Guran observes.

"I only want him to realize the potential," Aron answers. "Which is a better way to live--working in one small organization, or ruling over all?"

"I'm just a scientist," Guran concedes.

On the bridge, Kiri receives an urgent report: both Balalant and Gilgamesh fleets are now approaching the Quent system. Kiri has to make a decision. If he wants to take this world, he has only three hours to do it!

Chirico and Shako climb onto their Zwerg again and ride out for Gomol City. Also approaching Gomol from above is a cargo vessel claiming to contain 300 'packages' for the mercenary center.

The ship lands, and the 'packages,' big, bulky crates, are trucked to the center and unloaded into a warehouse for later processing. When all is clear, one crate opens itself. Aron and Guran drive out in their sandrunner, and all other crates split to reveal an army of Zwergs, all ready for the worst.

Aron announces that no one is to shoot without his permission, and

the army moves in smooth formation out of the warehouse.

Outside, Guran halts their vehicle on a veranda overlooking the city as Aron makes a general announcement.

"Our intentions are peaceful. We are on an expedition here. Please keep clear."

Behind them, platoons of armed guards swarm out of the mercenary center to surround the invaders to their city.

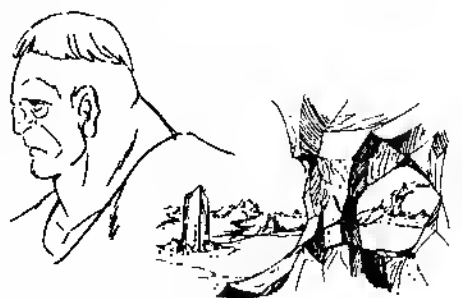
"Don't shoot," Guran cries, "we're only here on scientific research!"

"Then why do you have this army with you," the commander shouts, indicating the legion of A.T.'s.

"We need them, that's all. Please step aside." With that, the ranks of Zwergs move out to follow the brash scientists. The guards watch angrily, but are restricted from initiating a conflict.

In a nearby building containing a Gilgamesh outpost, however, the event is noted, and wheels begin to turn.

Back in the mercenary center, the Quentman who Chirico met on his arrival to Gomol takes his own actions. He activates his 'firesign,' which now turns out to be a shiny monolith-stone in one corner of his chamber. It glows on contact with his hand.



In the desert, Chirico and Shako pause to gather water from a pool. They look up as another monolith, jutting out from nearby rocks, emits the same glow. The firesign!

"Something bad is happening in Gomol," Shako interprets.

"Should we hurry?"

"It's too far. We could never get there in time to help."

But an idea has dawned on Chirico.

"Let's get back to the caves. Come on!"

In the lower heights of Gomol, the marching Zwergs saturate the streets, sending citizens cowering in all directions. Abruptly, a section of the street collapses, sending one hapless A.T. tumbling into a deep shaft. The resultant explosion is quickly followed by the eruption of a huge block of machinery that juts upward into the daylight.

Aron and Guran observe that it is similar to the technology of the underground corridors, and continue the march toward upper Gomol. Before long, an entranceway appears and their destination lies before them.



Shako drives the stolen Zwerg back into the forbidden tunnels, and Chirico explains his plan to jump them directly to Gomol.

"If I'm right, one shot will do it."

Pulling his gun, he fires randomly at the machinery and almost instantly, the protective power spews out to teleport them (and the bullets from Chirico's gun) right into the heart of the city!

A short moment after they realize what has happened, a stray Zwerg approaches and demands to know what they are doing. Shako wastes no time in striking out, and Chirico leaps out of hiding to send the pilot scurrying away.

Aron and Guran see the commotion from far above and realize their enemy is back. Now both in A.T.'s again, Chirico and Shako charge into the fray, turning upper Gomol into a battleground.

Once again, the power of ancient legend bursts out of the complex, blasting A.T.'s one by one. But this time, however, they do not reappear...

EPISODE 45 ENCOUNTER

"Shakol Shut down--now!"

Aron and Guran are jumped out of upper Gomol, but Chirico and Shako deactivate their A.T.'s just in time to remain untouched. The battle is over.

In nearby space, the Balalant warship LESLION and its support vessels arrive, and Rochina receives an immediate report from his agents in Gomol.

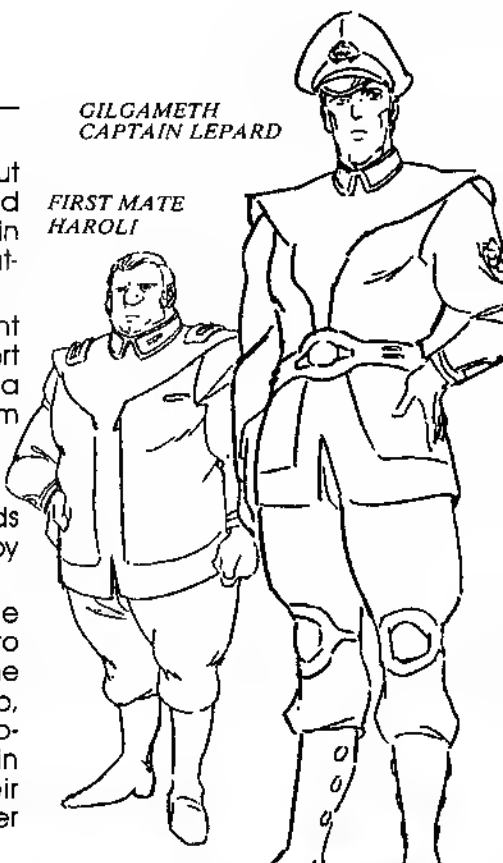
"Anything about Chirico?"

"He's here," a voice responds over the crackling radio. "Stand by for our report..."

Not far away, ships of the Gilgamesh spacefleet loom into view as well. In the mess hall of one ship, we see familiar faces...Gotho, Vanilla, and Coconna, now captives of the Gilgamesh, complain loudly about the quality of their meal to the unfortunate soldier assigned to guard them.

GILGAMETH
CAPTAIN LEPARD

FIRST MATE
HAROLI



On the ship's bridge, the commanding officer, Captain Lepard, receives his own briefing of the Gomol situation and is asked to land by the city government.

Unceremoniously tossed back into their cell, Gotho and his young companions watch as the ships in their vanguard change direction. Where are they going now?

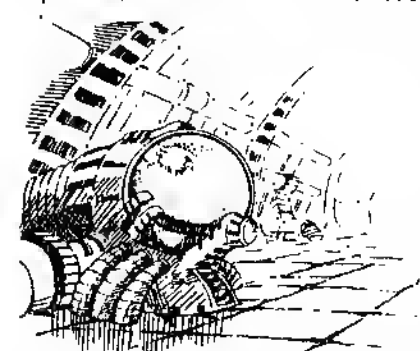
As Chirico and Shako begin to explore upper Gomol, a landing craft from the LESLION touches down, and Rochina and Fyana roll out toward the city.

"If you meet Chirico again, I advise you against escaping. You'll find there is no use trying."

Chirico and Shako wander through the dark, throbbing chambers of upper Gomol. Amazed that it still functions after untold years, Chirico wonders again what it all has to do with him.

While Aron and Guran begin regrouping their men outside the city, Rochina and Fyana drive right into upper Gomol and are instantly teleported out of their vehicle to a place deep inside the structure.

"These are the remains," Rochina explains, "of Quent's old culture."



Experimenting, Chirico touches a glowing orb and he and Shako are jumped to another chamber where sparks of lightning leap and hiss at them. Watching...

And unexpectedly, energy surrounds Chirico's body. Shako watches helplessly as Chirico is raised into the air...



Elsewhere, Rochina speaks to Fyana as they explore the area.

"Do you remember what I told you about my superior? He is here. Perhaps I can introduce you."

"You also said Chirico would find something here."

"Yes. He might already have."

Suspended by crackling beams of light, Chirico blinks as images flash uncontrollably through his mind. Monoliths in the desert...the explosion of a nuclear weapon...an ancient city rising on jets of flame...things he never saw before.

"My superior's mind is what 85,000 years of Quent's culture produced," Rochina continues to Fyana. "It told me to watch for Chirico since the time his war began."

Chirico's images continue. A shining Gomol in all its technological glory...a face built of cold machinery...

"3,000 years ago," says Rochina, "Quent's culture reached the peak of its existence and produced Superhumans. Because of their abilities, they were exiled from this world. They used their power to try and dominate the galaxy, influencing the Gilgameth and Balalant sides separately. This is the power of my superior."

All at once, the energy suspending Chirico depletes and drops him just as Rochina and Fyana jump again, landing right in front of him. Fyana rushes into his arms and Rochina smirks confidently.

"I see you have met my superior. What did he tell you?"

"What business is it of yours," Chirico retorts.

"It's my right. I've been watching you under his orders. It was I who allowed you to come here. We've both met my superior, even ambiguously."

"Where is he?"

"I have no idea. I've only touched his mind like you. Now answer me. Does he need you as a P.S.?"

"I don't know yet. I don't even know what I am or why he called me."

Suddenly, the energy of the superior mind swirls around them again, speaking to them.

"The Gilgameth are coming," Rochina interprets. "Proto-1, we must return to our ship."

But Chirico pulls Fyana away

from Rochina, insisting that they will not be separated again, and they touch another orb that transports them away instantly.

A silent voice orders Rochina to let them go.

Reappearing in yet another chamber, Chirico, Fyana and Shako walk toward daylight that streams in before them.

"What now," Fyana asks.

"Better to lose ourselves in the desert than follow Rochina again," Chirico answers. "Shako, can you find her some jirium?"

"I can."

"Thank you. I owe you a lot."

Suddenly, the proximity of the Gilgameth becomes dangerously apparent—a trio of Scopedogs from the outpost appear in front of them and start to give chase.

Chirico and his companions disappear back into upper Gomol and spears of energy leap out at the A.T.'s...but they stop just short of being jumped.



Chirico emerges into a chamber larger than any they've seen thus far. Sparkling energy ascends heavenward from a gigantic orb in the center. Despite its ominous appearance, Chirico reaches out and uses it to jump them again, this time up to the very roof of the city structure.

"The top," Shako proclaims.

"How do we get down," Chirico asks.

"No Quentman was ever here before."

Hazarding to peer over the edge, they are startled when the Scopedogs materialize right behind them and resume the pursuit.

In space, the Gilgameth fleet prepares to make its move. Lepard states that they will support their troops already in Gomol, but if they try to seize Fyana, still legally their own P.S., they will inevitably run afoul of the Balalant, so they must create a strong front.

Running to a treacherous stone bridge, Chirico and the others attempt to cross it while their A.T. pursuers start chipping away at it from one side. Before it can collapse beneath them, Chirico uses a rope to swing the three of them off and toward another light orb. Its energy reaches out for them...

Rochina arrives at the LESLION's landing port and is informed of the Gilgameth presence. He turns to see Chirico, Fyana, and Shako materialize right behind him and smiles triumphantly.

"My superior said he would return you to me. You can never escape him."

Chirico only glares back, frustrated by the fate that continually intertwines Rochina's life with his own.

EPISODE 46 PREMONITION

The Gilgameth fleet commanded by Captain Lepard lumbers toward Quent and is observed by Albert Kiri from his command ship, concealed by a stray asteroid, who wonders if they too are after Quent's legendary secrets.

Aron and Guran report from the surface that although they have no scientific term for it, their army of A.T.'s has simply disappeared.

"Perhaps," they offer, "the technology of Quent has reawakened."

"Just as I thought," Kiri answers.

"You expected it?"

"Despite our lack of data, we know it has happened before." Kiri warns them of the approaching Gilgameth, and the scientists wonder if they might be able to recover Proto-1 in the event of a battle with Rochina's occupation force.

Aboard Lepard's command cruiser, a transmission from General Battentain warns the fleet officers of what they might be facing.

"Your mission must succeed at all cost. Quent was proud of its super-technology until 3,000 years ago, and now it has been resurrected. One of our units disappeared here before, and you must learn why Quent is being revived."

"Could it have been an accident," one of the men inquires.

"Someone has opened a secret door."

"Our prototype," another wonders, indicating Fyana.

"Perhaps. There may be a connection. Whoever it was lost an entire troop in their attempt."

Deciding to begin with diplomatic channels, Lepard prepares to radio for landing clearance from the mercenary center in Gomol.

Elsewhere on the ship, Gotho, Vanilla, and Coonna are delivered a meal in their cell. Learning of their destination from the guard, Vanilla proceeds to complain loudly about the food.

"It's better than what we get," the guard retorts. "You're not stuck with synthesized rations because you are 'guests' of the captain. But he probably just wants to use you to recover the P.S."

The smirking guard strolls away, ignoring Vanilla's insult that they're probably losing the war because of the garbage they have to eat.

"Do they mean Chirico and Fyana are here," Gotho wonders.

In the Gomol mercenary center, Rochina receives Lepard's transmission and grants the Gilgameth permission to land, despite the protests of his subordinates.

Later, Aron and Guran spy on the proceedings as Lepard's shuttle

descends on a Gomol landing pad. The captain disembarks, flanked by a unit of Scopedogs to match the Fatties in Rochina's greeting party.

"There used to be a Rochina in our army," Lepard hails suspiciously, "but I don't think it was you."

"You never know," Jan-Paul replies. "A lot of things change in a war this complex."

"I have a demand from Battentain: return our prototype at once."

"I once met it on planet Sunsa, but it escaped with a man called Chirico. That's all I know."

Lepard continues, unconvinced. "Battentain is asking for its return under no conditions."

"There is no such thing on Quent," Rochina snaps back.

Unexpectedly, Gotho and his fellow 'guests' are pushed forward, and Vanilla shouts a baldfaced greeting.

"Sorry. We were caught right after you let us go."

"We'd better be back with Chirico soon," Coonna demands. Rochina glares back, his subterfuge ruined by these loudmouths.

"We're witnesses," Gotho realizes. "That's why we're so important to them."

As they are taken away, Rochina concedes to return the P.S. to the Gilgameth at a specified time.

"I'll report our success to Battentain," Lepard grins. "We preferred a peaceful solution."

Aron and Guran observe as the meeting ends, almost disappointed by the calm. But, they remind each other, Rochina was never one to surrender.

"Is this wise," one of his officers wonders.

"It's either this, or we might as well abandon our mission here," Rochina explains. "We can get her back, but the Gilgameth must leave here first."

Chirico and Fyana realize this too, but he is determined not to let her go.

"I am afraid," she says, "but not for myself; for you."

"They had your friends," Rochina declares, interrupting the tender

moment," and we can't reject their demands or they will certainly attack."

Back in her cell with the others, Coonna is saddened to realize they are now only bait.

"Chirico won't let her go," Gotho comforts, "and he might help us in the bargain."

"If he gets here before we're killed," Vanilla adds.

On the bridge, Battentain congratulates Leopard on his successful meeting, but warns that Rochina doesn't usually give up this easily.

"Meanwhile," Battentain promises, "I'll look into the matter of your promotion."

In Gomol, Chirico and Shako stride through the Balalant vessel that will fly Fyana offworld. They approach the two pilots selected as A.T. escort, and Chirico asks his burly friend for help once again.

"I am a Quentman," Shako admits. "I cannot fight on my own world."

"I see."

However, Shako is willing to order one of the pilots to turn his Fatty over to Chirico, and knock him unconscious when he refuses.

Later, Aron and Guran watch the liftoff, noting that far more than just one ship are leaving Gomol. Rochina tries to comfort Fyana as the Gilgameth warships loom into view.

"Don't worry. They will take good care of you."

He receives landing permission from Leopard, and maneuvers the ship into the command cruiser's hangar deck, where the captain waits to offer a formal greeting. The respective A.T.'s of each army line up behind the officers, and one particular Fatty scans the huge deck intricately, preparing to

make a move...

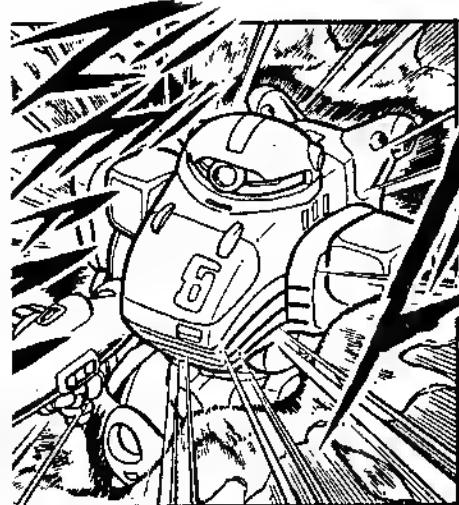
"When I return your property," Rochina begins, "I would like you to leave the area."

"We said we would take it back under no conditions," Leopard sneers. "We plan to stay and send exploration units to Gomol. We hope it will go peacefully."

A Scopedog steps forward to seize Fyana, but Chirico cuts loose with a shot that slices its head clean off, and the tense scene explodes with pent-up fury. Ducking the ensuing volley of gunfire, Rochina yanks Fyana back into their ship and guns it out of the hangar.

While Chirico makes hell in his wake, Rochina soars away, sending an attack signal to his own fleet, now approaching from outside scanner range. The Gilgameth open up with all batteries, and all the months of restrictive peace treaties vanish in an explosion of violence.

Chirico takes advantage of the turmoil to free Gotho and the rest from captivity and covers their escape in a shuttle. Blasting out into space after them, he pauses to survey the erupting war zone and begins to feel a premonition. Something disastrous is about to happen...something only Chirico can sense.



EPISODE 47 DISASTER

Monitoring the impromptu battlefield, Leopard laments to his advisors about losing the P.S. when it was so close at last.

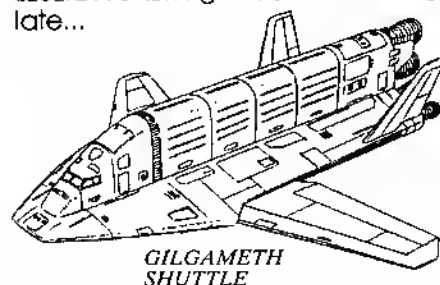
"This is advantageous for us," one of them counters. "We outnumber the Balalant two to one from the onset."

"Then we can still accomplish Battentain's mission when this is over," Leopard notes. "We can still capture the secret of Quent!"

Outside, Chirico cuts a vicious swath into the Gilgameth soldiers, and Gotho, Vanilla, and Coonna



find themselves in more trouble when their stolen Gilgamesh shuttle runs into Rochina's Balalant vanguard. Gotho screams into the tranceiver to reach Rochina on the LESLION's bridge before it is too late...



GILGAMETH SHUTTLE

There, Jan-Paul's suspicions about the Gilgamesh are now confirmed, that reclaiming Fyana was only a ruse to get to Quent. A controller brings news of the heavy odds against them, and a frazzled-looking trio of former Gilgamesh prisoners is marched in.

Gotho and the others explain Chirico's whereabouts to Rochina, who then orders them locked up despite more of Coconna's infamous tongue lashings, and tells his crew to locate Chirico immediately.

Tossed into yet another 'guest room,' Gotho and his companions rise to see an old friend: Fyana.

"I'm glad you're safe," she welcomes. "I'm sorry. This is all because of me."

"It's all right," Coconna replies. "We care about what happens to our friends. It's good to be so beautiful, isn't it?"

"Oh, I don't know," Vanilla interjects. "I prefer ladies not so beautiful sometimes..."

"Are you saying I'm not--"

"Shut up," Gotho shouts at the perpetual arguers. "Chirico is still out there somewhere..."

Indeed, Chirico is now being steadily outnumbered, and his A.T. takes serious damage as the first Balalant ships start to fall to the larger Gilgamesh force.

On the outskirts, Albert Kiri and his men monitor the skirmish, waiting for an opportune moment to step in and recapture Fyana.

Finally, when LESLION begins to receive a pummeling, Rochina barks withdrawal orders, but the ship's main engine has been crip-

pled by heavy fire. Rushing to a monitor, he manages to spot Chirico, tumbling toward the ship in a severely damaged Fatty--not a good sign. The former Red Shoulder is still alive, though, and joins Rochina in his cabin following a rough landing.

"Looks like you lost after all," Chirico observes.

"It doesn't matter. We recovered both of you."

"Are you planning to use her again now?"

"Only if we have to surrender. Get some rest. You'll need it."

In the forbidden chambers of upper Gomol, the ancient machinery pulses and glows, charging the air with the energy of 3,000 years. It culminates with a tremendous burst of light at the peak of the city, which

risers all the way out to space. It connects with one of the blazing warships--and it vanishes in a flash!

Lepard watches incredulously as more bursts erupt from the planet below and destroy more ships, wondering if it is some Balalant super-weapon.

Rochina proclaims it to be the very protection system of Quent--wide awake at last!

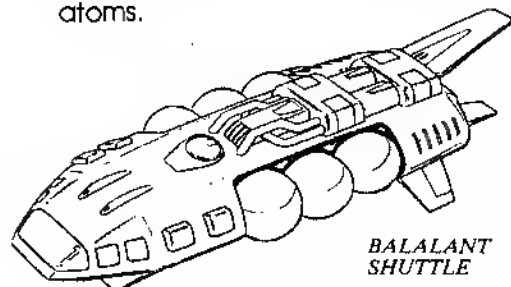
"Quent power," Albert Kiri confirms. "The secret is revealed!"

Rochina's men shout for LESLION's main booster to be realigned immediately before they are caught by the light bursts as well, but Chirico wisely suggests they do the opposite: cut all power and abandon ship while it is no longer a live target.

However, Captain Lepard is not



so observant, and only has time to report the crisis to an angry Batten-tain before his vessel is blown to atoms.



BALALANT SHUTTLE

Gathering in a small shuttle, Rochina, Chirico, Fyana, Gotho and the others blast away from LESLION. Chirico orders Vanilla (at the helm) to shut down the engines and drift on inertia. He does this just in time as a swarm of energy zips past, too close to take chances with.

Outside Gomol city, Aron and Guran radio their impressions of the spectacular lightshow to their master.

"It's amazing! It's outside our scanner range-impossible to measure!"

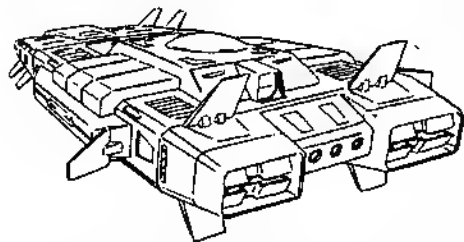
Abruptly, the turmoil stops, indicating the skies are now clear of hostility.

"Why did it end," Kiri demands.

"We don't know. We'll have to investigate now that the area is clear. What about our P.S.?"

"Don't worry," Kiri replies. "There is still one ship left up here..."

Far away from the disaster, Batten-tain assembles his general staff at a Gilgammeth base to discuss the Quent phenomena. Everyone has to admit it is beyond their reckoning, and a dramatic proposal is made: why not form a joint expedition with the Balalant to learn the answers?



Back on Albert Kiri's command ship, Aron and Guran return to see the approach of that last active vessel. It has only just returned to normal flight mode, which is why it

avoided being hit, they surmise.

"So what now," Vanilla inquires.

"It's over for you," Rochina snaps. "I'll leave you on planet Lapiatch and..."

"We're not leaving Chirico," Coconna shouts. The bickering is interrupted by the warning buzz of an approaching vessel, neither Balalant or Gilgammeth...but who? Vanilla prepares to brazen his way through a transmission, but the ship is already hailing them.

A gruff voice declares that they are in his firing range and to stop immediately.

"Identify yourself," Rochina barks.

"Stop your ship," the voice responds. "I know you have the Gilgammeth P.S. We aren't concerned about the Quent energy if you plan to defy us..."

"Who are you?"

"See if you can guess," the voice finishes.

"Probably not Gilgammeth," Rochina speculates. "Chirico, what do you suspect?"

"Same as you."

"I see. Then we'll just wait..."

The oncoming ship smoothly swallows them into its deck, and uniformed guards meet them at the boarding ramp.

"Are you pirates," Rochina growls. "Why don't you identify yourselves?" He is answered with drawn guns.

"Our master wants to see you. This way."

Lead to the bridge, Rochina is astounded to finally meet the criminal defector he was hunting so long ago-Albert Kiri.

"It has been a while," Kiri greets him triumphantly. "A pleasure to meet you at last." He orders Gotho and company locked up again, and enjoys his coup over his greatest nemesis while Chirico and Fyana look quietly on.

"Seems as if your mission is over, Rochina."

"Is it?"

"God has blessed me. The power of Quent is mine to control. When I kill you, perhaps you may meet the

Quent god, eh?"

But no sooner has the ship started for the planet in question, than it is seized by an invisible grip, and shudders uncontrollably. Kiri demands to know what is happening, but all systems are simply failing!

"I might be glad to leave all of this," Rochina mutters, but then a new power surges through the ship's instruments, and a now-familiar energy fills the bridge as the vessel heads off in a new direction.

"Wiseman," Chirico states meaningfully.

"You know? How did you learn that name," Kiri demands. Then he, Chirico, and Rochina exchange knowing glances which Aron and Guran interpret:

"We know nothing of this new mystery...but somehow, these three do."

EPISODE 48 SUCCESSOR

The tension mounts on the bridge of the Secret Society's command ship as it is drawn into unknown territory. The first everyone sees of their silent captor is a vast field of glassy, tube-shaped objects, each as large as the ship itself. Maintaining speed, the vessel plunges right into the floaters, its retros firing automatically to avoid collision.

"Unbelievable," Rochina gasps.

"This," Kiri says, "is the technology of God!"

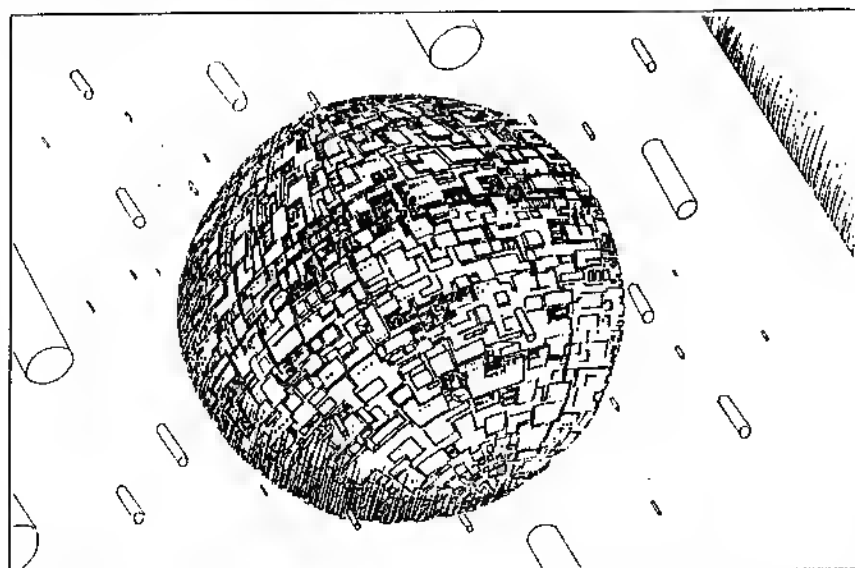
Fyana edges up to Chirico, gripping his arm.

"I'm afraid of what will happen to you. You're going far away from me. I can't even understand your thoughts any more."

"I only want to know what this is," he replies.

Frightened by the spectacle outside, Coconna huddles close to Vanilla, only to shriek when he actually consents to putting his arms around her. But his mind is on the new object that now comes into view--a moon-sized globe, its surface gleaming with machinery.

"An artificial planet," observe Aron and Guran. They are stunned



by the size of the leviathan as their ship, a speck by comparison, is gently lowered and set down in a huge ready-bay. Instantly, the familiar energy of Gomol swarms through the bridge, and the two scientists continue to theorize:

"Perhaps this wave energy can only be received through neuro-connections in certain people like these three." Indeed, Chirico, Rochina, and Kiri all have a distant look, as if being spoken to by an unseen presence. "It seems Wiseman is our ultimate master. It must have given these three a common experience, even Chirico."

"Our main interest until now was in studying the P.S., but this is a far greater subject."

The supposed-communication ended, Kiri turns to the others.

"Wiseman wants Chirico brought to him? Why?"

"He used to give me the same commands," Rochina now realizes. "But he never specified Chirico before."

Perturbed that Rochina seems to be treading his sacred soil, Kiri orders him taken into captivity before his execution.

"You're finished. Now I will complete this mission!"

Shortly thereafter, Kiri, the scientists, and two guards escort Chirico out of the ship and into the endless tunnels beyond. In their cell, Gotho puzzles over the situation with Vanilla and Coconna.

"I don't understand this," he

states. "They used to pursue only the P.S., but now they want Chirico." Refusing to idle away another captivity, Coconna bangs loudly on the door, and her yelling soon brings a trio of guards, armed for the execution. Vanilla spots an opportunity...

"What's going on out there?"

"Rochina is locked up in the next cell, and our master took your other friend off the ship."

They begin to raise their guns menacingly, but Vanilla begs them to wait.

"Couldn't I at least have one last smoke?"

Grudgingly, the first guard lights one up for him, and Vanilla collapses into a coughing spree after one puff, slyly getting close enough to twist around behind the man and grab his weapon. The others follow suit, deftly incapacitating the remaining men.

Nearby, Fyana asks Rochina what will become of Chirico.

"That's what I'd like to know," he grumbles.

A knock on the door heralds another armed guard, but Vanilla steals up behind him just in time to prevent the promised execution. He frees Fyana, but asks the others what they should do with the ever-treacherous Rochina.

"I know where you can find Chirico," Jan Paul promises, gaining a place in the escape party, but not a weapon from a suspicious Gotho.

In Battentain's council chamber, the general staff reacts to recent events at Quent, insisting that the Gilgamesh log a formal grievance against the Quent government--if one really exists, that is.

"One of our units made it free," Battentain reports, "and spotted a ship belonging to some third party leaving the area."

Another officer observes that since both the Gilgamesh and Balalant suffered losses in the recent disaster, a diplomatic summit should be held immediately. Battentain agrees.

Marching through the long corridors of Wiseman, Kiri's guards, walking ahead of their charges, stride headlong into an invisible force field and are thrown back. Chirico and the others, however, walk right through. Kiri mentioning that only the chosen may enter the castle of Wiseman.

A bit further on, they stop before a blank wall which suddenly shifts and moves away, revealing a portal of brilliant light. Vowing to now make Chirico the ultimate object of investigation, Aron and Guran follow him upward.

"My dream is realized," Kiri smiles. "Wiseman's power is great, but even he cannot rule this entire galaxy alone."



Somewhere behind them, Rochina fill in his newfound benefactors on the strange commands he has followed to bring Chirico this far, only for Kiri to take over.

"Then you were outwitted," Gotho chides.

"This is all I can tell you so far."

"But now we're all after the same thing," Coconna interrupts. "We all want to help Chirico."

"He is very different from other soldiers, even more than a P.S.," Rochina warns.

"I don't know what you mean," Vanilla interjects, "but he is our friend..."

"He's human, not a monster," Coconna insists.

"He's even more than a monster. He is...well, no use trying to convince you. He and Wiseman are--"

Rochina is cut short by deafening gunfire: the guards have given chase, and Vanilla lays down covering fire for the others to sprint on ahead toward the first two men who now wait for Kiri's return. Spotting Rochina, they raise their rifles.

"You escaped!"

"No, don't shoot," Jan Paul bellows authoritatively. "Didn't you get your master's order? He needs us here urgently!" The guards almost buy it, but Vanilla picks that moment to charge on by, embroiled in a firefight. Cursing, his cover blown, Rochina nevertheless manages to duck into hiding while the guards pursue the rest into the maze of tunnels.

Elsewhere, Kiri and the others stop before the door of light and the communication energy surges around them.

"Chirico only," Kiri stammers. "what about me? WHY NOT ME?"

Not even granting Kiri a smirk, Chirico obediently enters the light and is abruptly pulled into a brilliant tunnel. Suddenly, he stops, suspended in the middle of a sheer, bottomless shaft, its walls lined with the glowing panels of a gargantuan computer--the instrument of Wiseman!

The panels light up one by one, issuing a tone that Chirico can both understand and answer:

"Wiseman! What you've said is true. My fate was in your control. But why?"

"Then what's the difference between me and a P.S.?"

"Yes, both are a product of human engineering. But why am I like them?"

"Do you mean...I'm a born Perfect Soldier?"

"Like you? What do you mean?"

"We were born by the history of Astragius?"

"Wait...am I the master of space...like you? All right, I see."

And as he does, Chirico's eyes narrow, a look of simultaneous calm and determination easing over his features.



"I am honored to be your successor." With that, he is bathed in a symphony of brilliance, the light of divinity.

Outside, Kiri and his scientists wait pensively, and the communication energy speaks to him at last.

"It's over? My mission is finished? Then why have I been--WISEMAN--" He tries to enter the light, but is brutally blasted backward, crashing lifelessly to the floor with unfulfilled ambition twisting his face to a grimace.

Speechless, Aron and Guran look up as Chirico emerges before them and eyes the corpse of his former

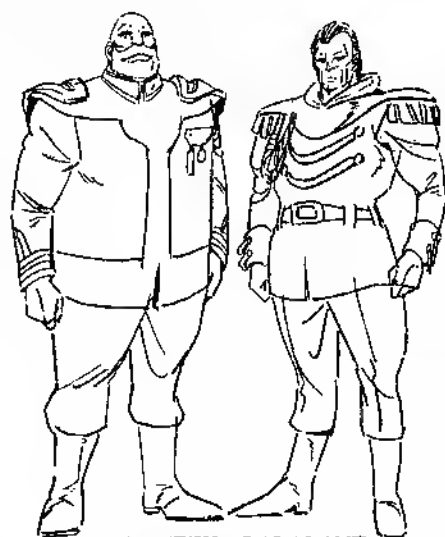


enemy.

"I am Wiseman's successor. The mind of God has declared it. I see my own fate now."

"I am God."

EPISODE 49 WORKER OF WONDERS



GILGAMESH PRESIDENT
BALALANT PRESIDENT

In Astragius Galaxy year 7214, a momentous event heralds the beginning of a new era. For the first time, both the Gilgamesh and Balalant armies join forces against a common foe. The supreme commanders shake hands to commemorate the milestone.

"We must recognize the word of history...everything from the P.S. development to our recent battles, and all the wars of 3,000 years were begun by the Quentmen who called themselves superhumans," states the Gilgamesh Commander-in-Chief.

"We must work together to reclaim our territories," his Balalant counterpart agrees, "and uncover the god who captured Chirico."

"Yes. Let us sign the treaty as quickly as possible. This is a historic day...a day when the last God will finally die!"

In the chambers of Wiseman's machine world, Aron and Guran ask Chirico what he has learned. Chirico only steps aside, indicating the portal of light.

"Go. He is calling you."

With no little trepidation, the two

edge forward but are yanked inside to encounter the same enigmatic computer, which gives them their next assignment.

"You say to obey Chirico? Why?"

"Superhuman? This cannot be!"

Slinking through the corridors to evade enemy fire, Vanilla, Gotho, Coconna, and Fyana try to find Chirico. The guards begin to regroup nearby, unaware that their main object of pursuit, Jan Paul Rochina, has removed himself from the chase.

Incapacitating a guard patrol, Fyana demands to know how to find Wiseman. Her victim's hasty directions prove correct, leading her and the others to the portal of light, beyond which they can see Chirico floating with a mystified pair of scientists.

"What is this," she shrieks.

"What's wrong with him," Vanilla asks.

"LEAVE," orders Chirico.

"You haven't forgotten me already, have you," Coconna protests.

"Chirico," Gotho begins, "why don't you just tell us what's happened?"

"YOU WILL KNOW."

Vanilla smiles nervously. "When did you take charge here?"

"Just now," Aron and Guran stammer. "We're all under his control!"

As if to illustrate, the group is swiftly surrounded by guards, made to drop their weapons, and hauled away.

"We are leaving in three hours," Chirico commands. "Prepare the ship with supplies and weapons."

"Then we are escaping," the scientists ask. "To where?"

"Don't question. My order is Wiseman's order!"

Shortly thereafter, Aron and Guran supervise the loading of the command ship.

"I can't believe it. There is a superhuman even beyond the Quentmen."

"A mutation. The people of Quent destroyed their culture to prevent something like this. That's why

Wiseman is interested in Chirico—he's a new type of superhuman!"

"Do we really have to obey him," Aron wonders.

"Stop it," Guran pleads. "Even I don't know what to believe anymore!" A report crackles over the comlink, informing them that Rochina has yet to be found.

"If we want to learn about Chirico," Guran concludes, "we should start with Rochina."

Back in their cell on the ship, Gotho admits that Chirico has reverted to the same enigmatic person he met in Uoodo.

"Guess his meeting with Wiseman changed him after all," Vanilla sighs.

"No it didn't," Coconna hollers. "Nothing could ever change him!"

"Something is definitely on his mind," adds Fyana.

Still suspended in the vast computer shaft, Chirico receives a communique from the ship's bridge crew, who are having trouble calculating their escape route.

"It's too dangerous to fly through the floater belt!"

"I'm not asking your opinion. Wiseman prepared our navigational program. It is perfect. Input it immediately!"

Then, a new voice comes in over the circuit. Rochina's.

"Chirico...you've been a busy man."

"Haven't you been captured yet? Where are you?"

"I heard what has happened," Rochina responds, ignoring the question. "I only want to know what's on Wiseman's mind. What is your mission?"

"I pity you," Chirico answers. "You were used by him for so long, and now you know nothing."

"Did you accept a mission? Will it benefit you?"

"It will. The Gilgamesh and Balalant have joined. They are coming to kill me and destroy this place. But we'll be gone when they arrive."

"You can't escape them. Better let yourself be captured. I can guarantee your life..." Rochina is in-

terrupted by the sound of klaxons.

"Enough talking," Chirico orders. "They have come."

"NO! Tell me—what is your purpose?"

"To meet Wiseman. He is calling."

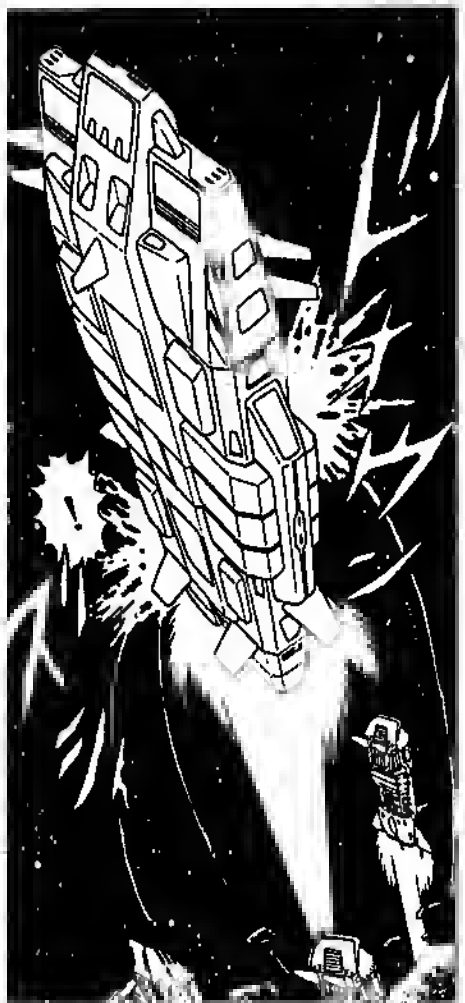
Chirico signs off as the combined warfleets begin to approach the globe's floater swarm. In the control room overlooking his ship's landing bay, Chirico approaches Aron and Guran.

"Are you certain you want to use the floater belt," they ask.

"You doubt Wiseman? This is the only way to escape."

Out of sight, Rochina slips into the supply train bound for the command ship.

As the massive fleet of invading vessels encounters its first contact with the floaters, the entire segment of the globe containing the landing bay tears free! Its thrusters blast it away, but only seconds pass before it is riddled with missile fire from the incoming ships.



Rocked by the explosions, Gotho and his fellow cellmates learn of Chirico's whereabouts from a guard—he is now on the bridge of the main ship.

"I thought this was the main ship," Gotho declares.

"This is only the sub-ship," he is informed. "Right now they're joined, but we'll be separated when the time comes."

Outside, Chirico's plan to delay his attackers with the floaters works to a point—but against the sheer numbers, the protective armor of the globe segment is soon blasted away, forcing him to launch the command ship free. With its superior programming, it easily outdistances its pursuers.

"Success," Aron cries. "They can't come near us!"

"Not quite," Chirico observes calmly. "We can't stay in this belt forever."

And soon, a squadron of Balant fighters breaks through the obstacles and scores several devastating hits on the ship.

"It's over," Guran shrieks. But Chirico thinks otherwise.

"Our honor to, sir," a controller responds.

And despite Fyana's heartbroken screams, the command ship splits in half, the bow soaring away from the stern, leaving her to die.

"CHIRICO," Gotho shouts, "DON'T LEAVE US!!"

"In the end, your death will not have been in vain," the successor replies coldly. "I will go to Quent. There, Wiseman waits for a superhuman...a born P.S...he has ruled all of space for 3,000 years. He was thought to be exiled, but he has waited underground...for me."

Spurred into desperate action, Gotho taps reserved strength and crashes through the guards, leading everyone to an escape shuttle. It launches away just as the sub-ship is overwhelmed...and soon, all guns turn toward them.

"Chirico," Fyana sobs, "are you truly..."

"I was born a Perfect Soldier," he introspects as he leaves his past to burn away. "I was destined to be more than human...above right and wrong. Like Wiseman, I will accept my destiny. I will be the successor. I will be the master."

speaks.

On the surface, Coconna chews out Vanilla for failing to crash-land their ship any closer to Gomol city, as the quartet now has to walk across miles of desert.

"We came out of a war zone," he retorts. "My piloting skill is the only thing that got us THIS far!"

Screaming that there is no way she would never marry him now (which was news to Vanilla in the first place), Coconna walks flat into a huge figure standing in wait—Shako! The others shout their glee in his return.

"Where is Chirico," he asks. Gotho explains that Chirico is planning to become Wiseman's successor, which Shako confirms as Mage's dying predilection.

"The son of God will descend to Quent and decide the fate of the Universe."

Elsewhere, Chirico watches angrily on the bridge of his command ship as the controllers puzzle over a set of navigational readings that pinpoint their location—but they are not where they should be. One man spots an alteration in the trajectory program, slight, but enough to change their route.

Shortly thereafter, Chirico confronts Aron and Guran in the ship's lounge.

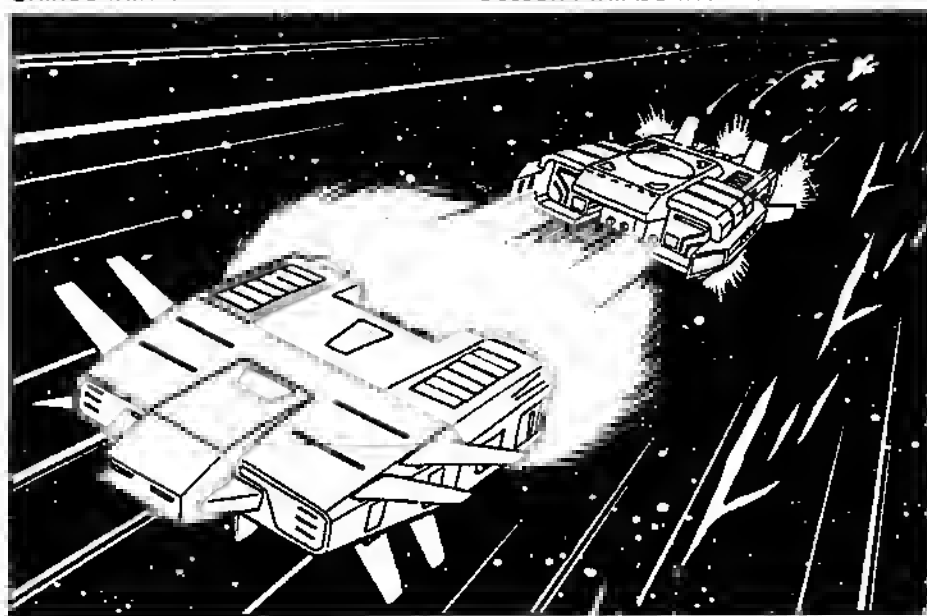
"Our navigation program was changed," he announces, "and you two are the only ones who could have done it. Because of you, our arrival on Quent will now be delayed by twenty hours!"

"You mean we did that," Guran cries, apparently unaware of his brother's treachery.

"You hoped to use this time to plan a revolt," Chirico states, and gestures for the guards to bring in a prisoner—one of the co-conspirators. Faced with this evidence, Aron admits to the attempt.

"We have been used by Wiseman just as Kiri was," he explains. "When he no longer has need of us, we'll be killed as well."

Guran is shocked by the bold statement, but Aron continues. "But I have never regretted being his tool. Do you know why?"



"No. We've won. We're accelerating. We'll outrun them now." He takes a comlink in his hand to issue a shattering announcement.

"In a few moments, their main ships will catch up to us. We cannot afford it. We will separate the sub-ship. Try to hold them off. DIE FOR WISEMAN!"

EPISODE 50 STORM CLOUDS

In the caverns beneath the Quent desert, Lou Shako and Tedaya speak with Mage about the grim destiny that lies before them. Mage's reply is the last he ever



"Because Wiseman is God," Chirico answers.

"I don't know if that's quite the case, but he is at least more than merely human. He has ruled everything for 3,000 years." Abruptly, Aron jumps up and thrusts a finger at Chirico. "And a man like you is going to succeed him? I can't bear it! KILL HIM!!!"

But the guards remain motionless.

"Take them," commands Chirico.

Drawing a gun, Aron blasts at his nemesis, but is instead fatally wounded by the faster-moving Chirico. Guran rushes to his dead brother's side.

"Wiseman knew of his plans and told me. I am yet his tool as well," Chirico tells the weeping scientist.

Very close, concealed by ducts and shafts, Rochina listens to every word.

"No one can avoid Wiseman's watch. He is everywhere. His word must be obeyed."

"Yes, I will," Guran cries.

"Very well. Onward to Quent."

"Chirico," Rochina wonders, "do you really want this? I'll know soon...when we see Wiseman."

Far behind them, in the regrouped battle fleet of Gilgamesh and Balalant ships, the joint command staff pinpoints their quarry's destination as Quent, the sight of the disaster that brought them together. It will likely cost them more vessels to follow him there, but there is little choice now.

Arriving in Quent orbit, Chirico solo-pilots an A.T. carrier down to the planet, leaving Aron in command of their ship.

"What a pity," a controller laments. "We should have waited

for this moment. Chirico has only one A.T. to protect him."

"What are you saying," Guran demands angrily.

"I...I only have sympathy for you."

"Forget it," Guran orders. "All we can do is obey him now. If Wiseman really is on this planet...I fear for us all."

As night settles on Gomol, Gotho and his perpetually-arguing companions bolt together an A.T. for Fyana.

"How do you know Chirico will come here," Coonna asks Vanilla.

"Shako told me," he answers. "He knows something about all this..."

"I can't believe it even now," Fyana confides in Shako. "Chirico will be the successor of Wiseman. There should be a good reason."

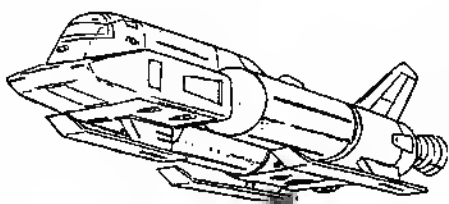
"But he abandoned you and ran. That's not the Chirico we knew."

"But..."

"I know. I like him, too. I also want the truth." She smiles and nods appreciatively as Gotho approaches.

"We're finished. This is an older Berserga-type A.T., but it's a good one for your skills."

"Please bring Chirico back to reality," Vanilla pleads with Shako, but the Quentman's eyes rivet on an object descending to the Gomol landing platform. He has come.



Chirico steps out of the landing craft in a freshly-built A.T.—the Rabidlydog, an even more powerful version of Ypsilon's Strikedog—and moves out for upper Gomol, where a gun-toting Shako steps out to meet him.

"Nice to see you again," the Quentman greets.

"How could you know I was coming?"

"You remember Mage, the predictor. I am here to help you, though I know not what for."

"The armies of Gilgamesh and Balalant will arrive soon. I need the light-energy of Gomol again. I want to find the control center!"

Suggesting that he can find it, Shako leads Chirico inside, while Fyana and the others sneak in behind them.

"Your coming here showed us many secrets," Shako explains. "The underground plant in our village..."

"The light-energy."

"Yes. Everything my people abandoned. Where is it all now? Was it part of my heritage that just happened to revive, or was it only programmed to save you? Who could have done that?"

"I am in a hurry, Shako."

"Yes. We'll know when we enter this place again."

Behind them, Vanilla dogs closely behind Fyana—too close for Coonna's taste, who gives him a jealous pinch.

"I'm your first," she proclaims.

Walking up to one of the teleportation orbs, Chirico steps out of his A.T. to jump himself and Shako into the chamber they seek—unmistakably the central control unit, over which hovers a giant black orb.

"It must be the mother computer," Chirico observes, but cannot read the inscriptions on the ancient machinery.

"Old Quent language," Shako discovers. "It was abandoned by our ancestors." He leans over to translate, and Chirico states that they now at least have a chance to repel the enemy.

"And you'll still have time to meet Wiseman?"

Chirico returns Shako's strange grin with a glare.

"It won't matter. Other gods came before me."

"Are you serious? There are other gods here?"

"You didn't know the gods you meant to expel 3,000 years ago are right below your feet? Wiseman waits underground. The plant near your village is one of the entrances."

Shako stammers, astounded by

the revelation.

"You can't mean you will really succeed Wiseman..."

"I will."

"YOU LIE!"

"If I was lying, I wouldn't have sacrificed Fyana and Gotho. But I don't care what you believe."

"Why are you doing this," the Quentman pleads. Chirico's answer chills him to the bone.

"Because of the war, many people have died and been reborn. New cultures and civilizations arose. War is the motivator, the creator of history. It is indispensable to mankind. The Universe should be controlled by one God. As a man brought up by the war, I am the most suitable successor of that God!"



"As a friend," Shako proclaims, raising his gun, "I cannot let you."

"Then shoot. Wiseman will just teleport me away. I am under God's protection!"

Unexpectedly, Shako instead whirls around and fires at the black orb, damaging the system. Chirico tackles him and runs to recover the rifle as Shako rises with a spear in hand.

"Chirico...tell me this is a lie. TELL ME!"

"It isn't. It's all true."

"Then I will stop you!" Mustering his great strength, Shako steps forward and Chirico shoots, planting a bullet in his leg. Despite the pain, Shako does not stop, and takes a deadlier hit in the chest. This proves too much even for the mighty Quentman, and as he collapses, Fyana runs in, Gotho close behind.

"Damn it," the old man shouts.

"I'LL KILL YOU!"

But before he can make a move, the computer system explodes, filling the room with smoke and debris. Chirico runs out, levelling his gun on Fyana to prevent her from following.

Instead, she touches another orb to jump her group up to the city roof, where they have left her A.T. Vanilla screams his anger and Gotho demands that they leave here immediately, but a shout from Coonna brings them to her side overlooking the city, where they can see Chirico's A.T. already speeding away.

"I'll go after him," Fyana resolves, climbing into her Berserger.

"But the armies are coming," Gotho protests.

"He's not the same man anymore," begs Vanilla. But she is resolute, and only answers with a farewell.

Aboard the command ship, Guran gasps at the hundreds of warships now approaching the planet, but a radio command from Chirico interrupts him.

"I'm heading for the Quent village! You remember it! Send me some support!"

"But against this many--"

"The controller in Gomol was destroyed. We'll have to fight without its power. Forget it—just follow my order!"

Enemy A.T. carriers begin to launch by the dozens, but Fyana is oblivious to the gathering storm and only tries to raise Chirico on her radio.

"Don't follow," he answers silently. "I don't want to see you again. I threw everything away. Forget about me. Whether my destiny lies in death or becoming God...the fight will soon begin."

EPISODE 51 PANDEMONIUM

A stolen shuttlecraft soars up into the Quent sky. Gotho and his friends have bandaged up an unconscious Shako, and Vanilla tries in vain to radio Fyana before he puts the planet behind them.

"Let me go," is all she answers.

"Chirico was brainwashed, that's it! He'll even fire at you!" But this time, static is Vanilla's only reply.

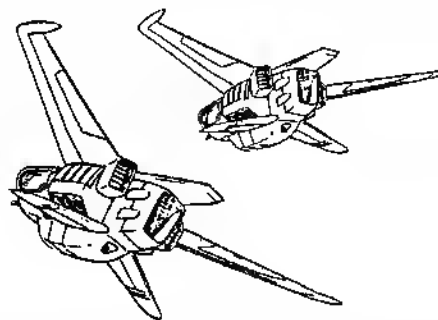
"It's the Ionosphere," Gotho says. "We're cut off."

"Then that's the last of Quent," sighs Vanilla.

Now descending in staggering numbers, the Balalant and Gllgameth A.T. carriers move into landing formation above Gomol. In the nearby wastes, Chirico is joined by the last Zwerg units Guran could send.

"Their landing point will be two kilometers ahead," one of the soldiers reports. "What is your order?"

"Full speed," Chirico growls. "straight ahead!"



The advance fighter squadrons of the Balalant thunder overhead, softening Chirico's platoon up with bombing runs while the first A.T.'s land in the dunes ahead and line up for interception.

Not even breaking stride, Chirico and his men careen headlong into the massive ranks and slam their way straight through to continue on their course, but not without cost.

"One third of our army lost," one of the Zwerg pilots states, but Chirico ignores the statistics.

"You only fight to support me!"

"But against this many, even you will be--"

Chirico switches his radio away from the annoyance and up to Guran in the command ship.

"We've almost reached the crevasse. Go to the next plan."

"Your A.T.'s are running low on fuel," Guran protests. "How can we--"

"Never mind! Start plan two now!"

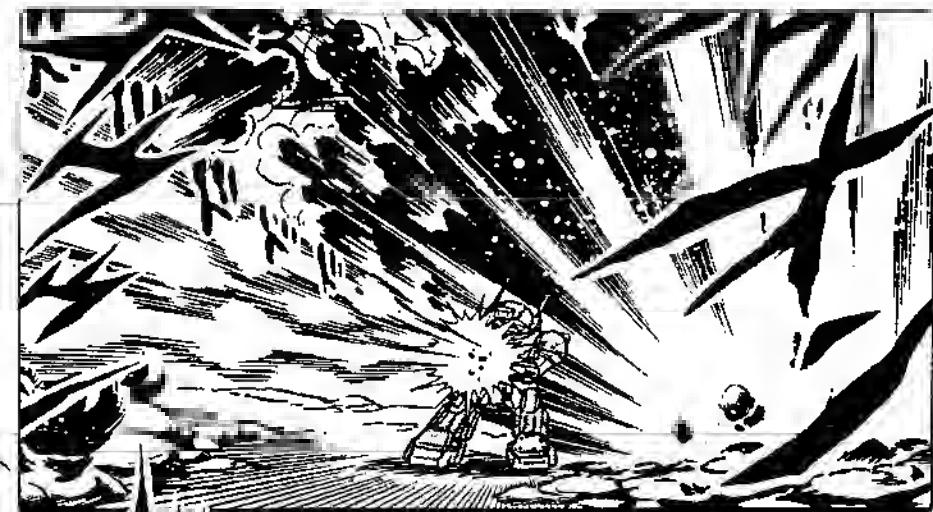
With that, the command ship

breaks out of its hiding place behind the asteroid moon and soars into planetfall, easily spotted by the warships still in orbit. Estimating its landing trajectory and matching it with Chirico's movements, the command staff wonders if they both are destined for the entrance to Wiseman.

But still between Chirico and his objective wait over a thousand A.T.'s. He orders his men forward despite the swarms of carriers dropping all around them.

his destination—the bottom of the crevasse that conceals the underground caverns. Fyana dismounts just before impact and slips into hiding again while Chirico and his two Zwergs disembark. Lying in wait, a platoon of Scopedogs attack and begin a running battle.

But far above, Guran begins to lose altitude from enemy fire and the command ship itself tumbles into the canyon, knocking rocks loose from the walls that crush most of Chirico's pursuers.



Fyana watches from her Berserga, concealed in nearby rocks, as Chirico hurls his Rabiidlydog at the attackers, a seemingly endless wall of opponents. With her loosing stray shots in his support, he leads his last two Zwergs into an open A.T. carrier and commandeers it.

Fyana bursts out of hiding and grabs onto one of the carrier's landing pods as he lifts it into the air, smoothly melting into all the traffic still coming down. He takes advantage of the moment to contact Guran, who is nearly at their destination, and orders missile salvos made ready.

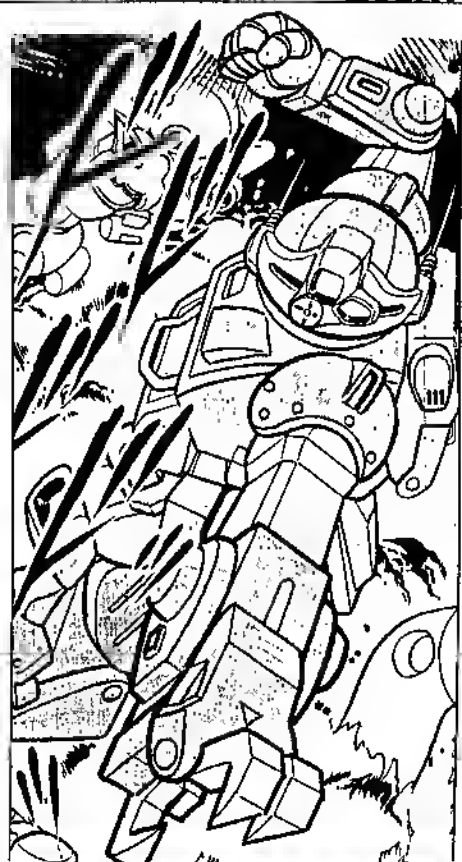
The transmissions draw attention, and the attackers launch salvos of their own that start tearing into the stolen carrier. Losing altitude, Chirico commands Guran to give him covering fire.

"Fight until the very end! I'll tell Wiseman what you have done!"

With that, the command ship moves into the fray and takes hits meant for Chirico as he struggles to set the ailing carrier down intact at

Moments later, the ship smashes into the ground and explosions begin to rip it apart. Running to escape, Guran is caught in a blast that hurls him brutally to the floor...and out from his demolished hiding place steps Jan Paul Rochina.

"YOU!"



He stands stonelike over the dying scientist, relishing his triumph.

"At last, I can get out of here."

"Wh...where?"

"I will witness whether Chirico is suitable to succeed Wiseman. I was his tool, too."

Now deep underground in the machine-filled caverns, Chirico leads the tenacious Scopedogs in a treacherous chase.

Reporting their observations to their superiors, the awestruck Scopedog pilots are ordered to kill Chirico before he reaches his goal. They press their advantage when he and his men finally run dry on ammunition, and plunge into hand-to-hand exchanges.

Momentum against them, Chirico and two of the Scopedogs are hurled into a long, steep shaft but land intact. Slugging them away, Chirico pauses for a tense moment, and energy swarms through the dark chamber.

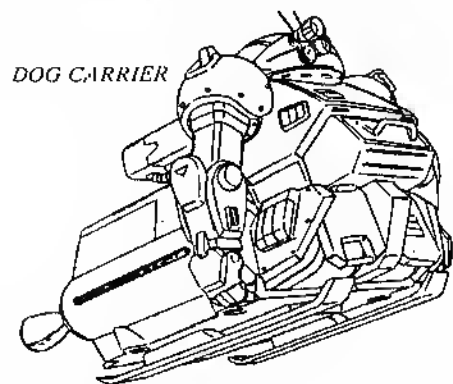
"CHIRICO, I am near. Hurry."

"Wiseman!"

"I have been waiting a long time, my successor."

"If it's really you, why don't you help me?"

DOG CARRIER



"One who can overcome such odds without my help is worthy to succeed me."

"I need your power," Chirico shouts. "I, who have been tormented as a superhuman..."

One of the Scopedogs lunges at him, knocking him over. Now battling his own fatigue as well, Chirico nevertheless smashes the A.T. and rises victoriously, closer to his destiny now than ever.

"Wiseman...I have come. I will have revenge on them all. I will give them Hell. I will be God."

EPISODE 52 SHOOTING STAR

Having lost all contact with the Scopedog pilots that chased Chirico underground, the joint command staff of the orbiting warfleet wonder if they are too late and if Chirico has already made contact with Wiseman. If so, their only remaining contingent is complete destruction of Quent.

Deep inside the planet, a tiring Chirico is forced to grapple with another pair of Scopedogs that



teleport into his vicinity. Just as he demolishes the last one, a new A.T. materializes nearby--Fyana's Berserga.

"Chirico! Come out--go with me!"

"Don't interfere," he warns.

"Do you really need Wiseman's power," she pleads. "It's no use. What do you think you will do with it?"

He doesn't answer, instead turning his back on her.

"If you go forward, I'll shoot," she threatens.

His Ravidlydog starts to walk away and she lunges forward to tackle him. Grabbing for her gun, he rises and fires, damaging her A.T. and throwing her back into the teleport field.

"Well done, Chirico," the voice of Wiseman commends. "I understand your willpower. Come to me now."

Following the voice, Chirico stops at a sheer wall of machinery. He tries to coax the Ravidlydog upward, but its joints snap and burn out, finally stressed beyond their limit. Climbing out, Chirico struggles to ascend on his own, but only manages a short distance before he too must pause and rest.

"Come, Chirico."

"Can't you appear before me," he pants.

"I am in front of you."

"No--the real you." Above him appear the ghostly figures of hooded men, ancient men from Quent's history.

"This is me. I no longer have a body."

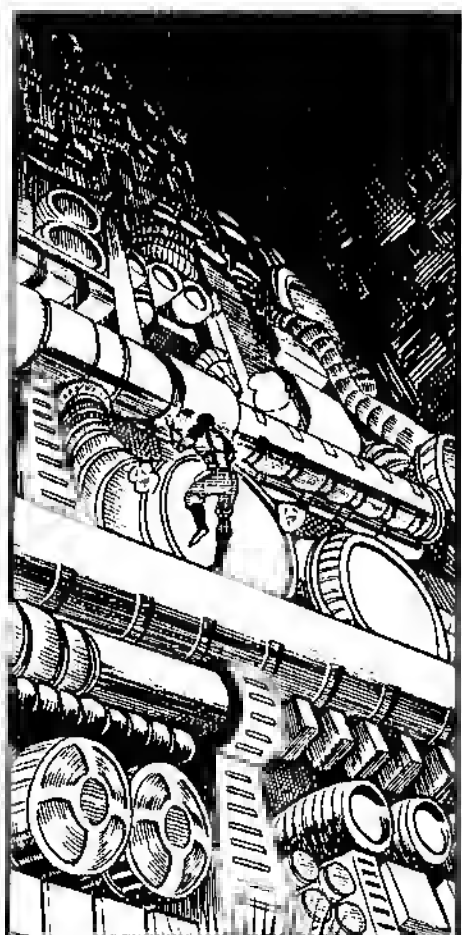
"Then you don't truly exist anymore? You called me here just to show me this magic?"

In answer, the hooded ghosts vanish, and the steep wall above him flattens out to a plane of brilliant light. He stands, and a glowing platform lifts him an unguessable height into a rounded grey corridor.

"My body was destroyed, but my mind is preserved here."

"Just electronic memory," Chirico taunts.

"No. I live. I watch you. Come up. I cannot help you down there."



Again, Chirico climbs, and the corridor arcs sharply upward to become a vertical shaft. Straining, he hauls himself up by the slim handholds to the opening and over its edge. Exhausted, he collapses onto a flat surface, gasping for air.

"Stand up, Chirico!" He is now in the largest chamber of all, its rounded walls lined with a vast grid of memory banks. THIS is the true center of Wiseman.

"You came all this way on your own. You are a superhuman, worthy of the power I will now give you."

And above Chirico, a spindly, pulsing machine begins to descend slowly, control panels glowing as if alive.

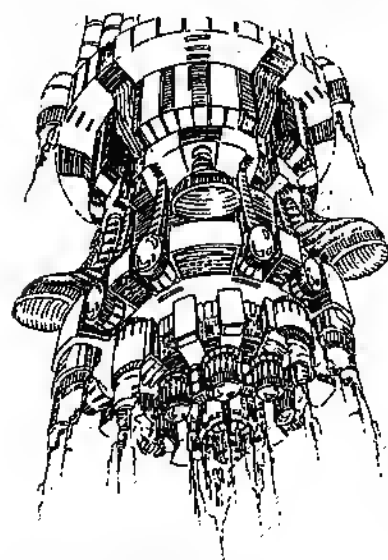
"Even if I could reach it," Chirico gasps, "that's all I can do..."

"You are inside me. All my knowledge and power will be yours in a moment."

"NO! I can't move..." Unabated, the machine looms closer.

"Chirico! You give up, after so much? You only have to stand!"

"I...can't..."



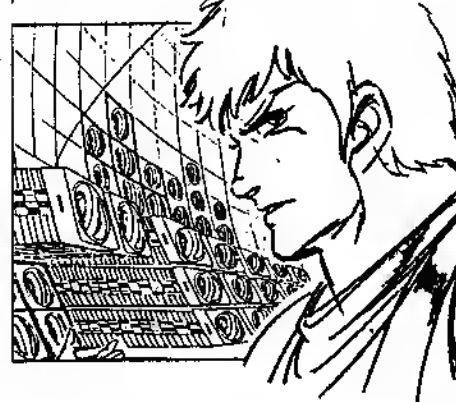
"STAND UP!"

Now only inches from the machine, Chirico flashes a wicked grin...and pulls a cord to fire his magnum straight into the delicate controls! Pulling it out from his holster, he fires again and again, blasting away at Wiseman and rolling out of his reach.

"CHIRICO! What have you done to the transferral machine? Don't be foolish! STOP! You need my power! You cannot betray me!"

As the hopelessly damaged unit withdraws, Chirico runs straight for the walls and begins deactivating the memory banks. One by one, they emerge and erase themselves as Wiseman pleads for his existence.

"You don't understand my power..."



"I am willing to die with you," Chirico snarls.

"STOP!" Suddenly, a nightmare blasts the air all around him—Wiseman unleashes a recording of the Red Shoulder anthem and it stabs at Chirico like a knife.

"When you were wandering the battlefield I manipulated you. Fyana is an example. You were destined to meet her. Your destiny was under my control."

"NO! I don't believe it!"

"Then why did you know her name when you first met? It brought the meaning of life to you when you had no hope. It brought the recognition of power and domination—through love!"

"I created you as an ordinary human. You have changed far more than I thought. Your desire for domination has become so strong that you wanted to kill even me. This is not impossible...you tired on Fyana."

"Remember your past. Remember everything, and do not let it anger you. Be proud of it! Take me over and dominate the entire war!"

Frozen by Wiseman's words, Chirico is besieged by flashes of his past in the Red Shoulders. The violence and death send shudders through his mind and body.

"What is more superior than perfect domination? When God kills, it is nothing."

"STOP," Chirico shouts, and lunges again for the wall to deactivate more of Wiseman's memory. His work begins to take a toll, and the voice of the computer begins to break and pause.

"Stop...Chirico...my dream...was the domination that began 3,000 years ago. I wanted it to last forever...but the one that will reach that point...will not be me. Perfect succession...becomes fatal, and it is impossible...to see...the next...generation."

"My memory...is almost...gone. You don't understand...if you destroy this memory...it cannot be retrieved...stop...Chirico..."

Mustering its last strength, Wiseman sends an electrical charge at him, hurling Chirico to the floor. But it is too late, and the voice is slowing to a dull slur.

"Chirico! What have you done?" Chirico stirs and looks up. Rochina stands over him. "It is becoming irretrievable! Turn it back on, or we'll never get it back now!"

Ignoring him, Chirico rises to continue the assault. Before Rochina can pull him away, in leaps Fyana! She knocks Jan Paul to the floor with a swift blow and runs to Chirico's aid.

"I'm sorry," he says sullenly. "In order to make Wiseman believe me...it was the only way."

"I realized it when you shot at me and avoided my robot's weak points."

Reunited at last, the two deactivate more and more memory banks until finally, irrevocably, Wiseman's voice fades and is still. Rochina rises, his face red with anger.

"STOP! No more! He is dead! What a stupid thing! Why didn't you try to receive his power! WHY? YOU KILLED GOD!"



Far above them, the warfleet begins the final countdown to release a barrage at Quent, but Rochina screams his rage, oblivious as he activates Wiseman's own self-destruct. Chirico and Fyana flee as the end draws near.

"The only reason you denied domination is FEAR! You were afraid! You destroyed the power I've been seeking for so long! If only I was superhuman...if only I—!"

The announcement rivets everyone's attention in the fleet—all missiles ready for firing. But as the countdown proceeds, a controller shouts an alarm.

"ENERGY WAVE! It will take eight seconds to reach us!"

A pause.

"One second!"



And for a long, destructive moment, Quent flares with the power of a sun. And is no more.

EPILOGUE YEAR 7215

Sometime later, an announcement blares over the P.A. system of a Gilgamesh warbase on a non-descript planet.

"We have detected Balalant movement in an area forbidden to the military. We can only consider it an act of war. From this moment, we have the order to fire on all Balalant ships without warning."

The announcement continues despite a scramble alarm on the landing field, where a group of soldiers sprint toward waiting space shuttles. An officer stops to investigate the actions of one of the soldiers.

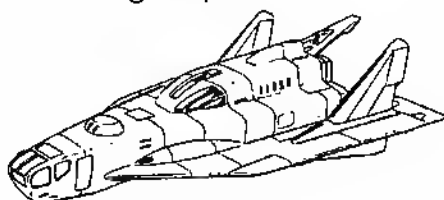
"What are you doing?"

The soldier is one Vanilla Varila, and he quickly trounces the nosy officer while his companions--Gotho, Coonna, and Shako, all in stolen uniforms, load a hibernation tube into a nearby ship. Seconds later, they launch, leaving the base

in confusion and turmoil.

Some time later, the vessel cruises on autopilot and Gotho laughs over their escapade.

"Who's afraid of an express ride out of this galaxy?"



Tending to their stolen machine, Coonna and Vanilla giggle as Gotho announces his future plans to retire from the war of business and find some quiet, rural area to set up a fix-it shop. Sealed inside the tube with Fyana, Chirico turns his gaze to the other two, asking what their plans are.

"Oh, you know, you know," they laugh, ribbing each other playfully.

"Won't you think this over again," Gotho asks. "There's no Wiseman anymore..."

"The war is beginning again. As

long as it lasts, we'll only be tools. We shouldn't even live in this time."

"Do you think there is a world without war," Vanilla wonders.

Chirico stares at him, no answer forthcoming.

"I will never forget about you," he says.

The tube is loaded into a chute and fired away into outer space like a shooting star.

"I hope they will be happy," Coonna laments.

"They'll be all right," Vanilla answers.

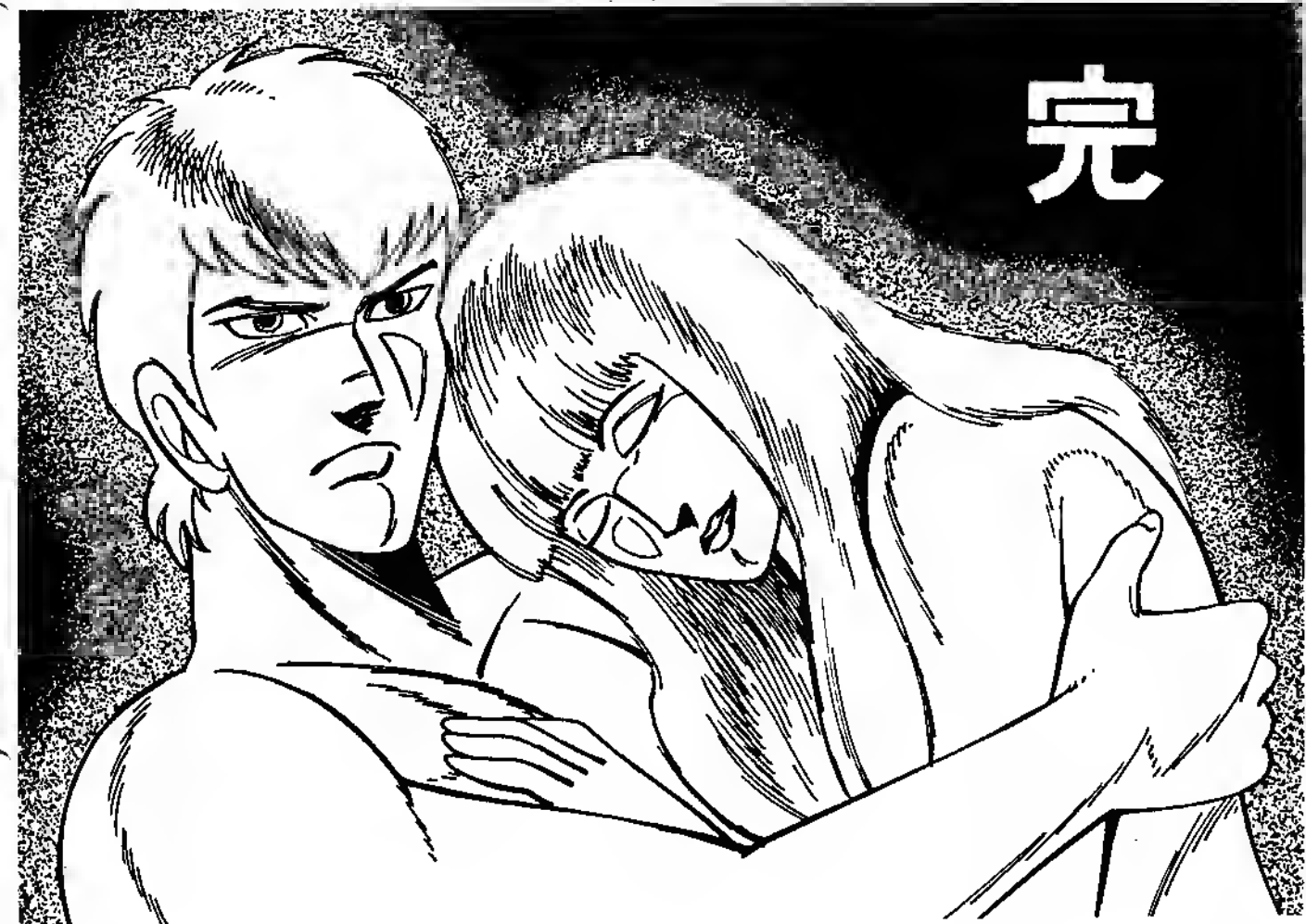
"In twenty minutes we will sleep," Chirico tells his mate.

"I want to look at space until then," Fyana says softly, and the skin of their tube peels back to reveal the heavens to them. Chirico watches the tiny ship vanish in the star-studded distance.

"Coonna. Gotho. Vanilla. Shako. I'm glad I knew you...and Fyana."

THE END.

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ARMORED TROOPER VOTOMS

装甲騎兵

ボトムズ

VIEWER'S GUIDE PART 8

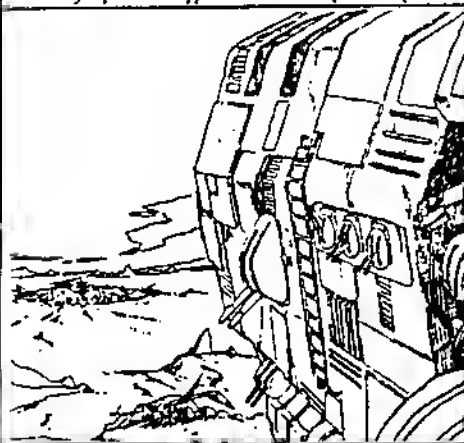
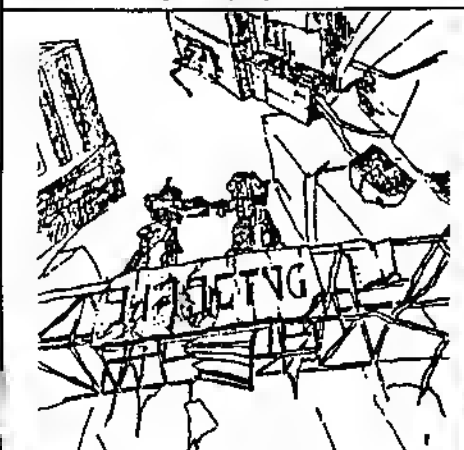
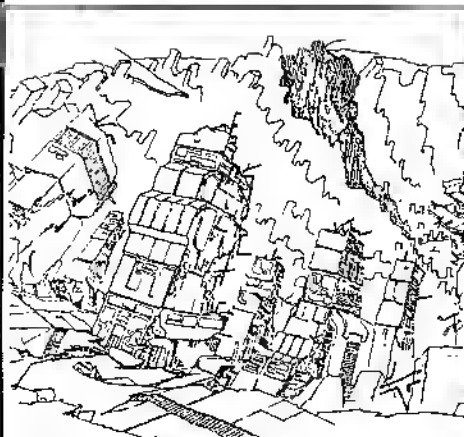
BIG BATTLE

ORIGINAL VIDEO

Following the destruction of Quent and prior to the series epilogue, Chirico and his companions return to Planet Merukia while events transpire to revive the war once again. It is here that his adventure, also titled 'Battle of the Heterogenous Species' takes place.

This OAV release provides an insight into previously-unexplored ideas, chiefly how the Balalant Army might conceive and develop its own Perfect Soldier with all the implications that involves.

This element throws new light on the established characters, allowing them to interact for intriguing results. **BIG BATTLE** also forces Chirico to confront one more thread from his past in Red Shoulder, and by the end of this story he has come to terms with it at last.



RADA NIBA

Once a Balalant field soldier, Niba belonged to a unit that was overrun by Red Shoulders. Wounded and near death, his body was recovered and saved by Balalant scientists who, anxious to build their own equivalent to the Merukian Perfect Soldier, replaced much of his body with bionic parts. Although this has made Niba nearly invincible, it is still an imperfect system and requires periodic re-energizing with painful electric charges. This continuously aggravates traumatic memories of his violent battlefield experience, which is given an outlet in the Battle Ring of Aa Koba City on planet Merukia. Less than emotionally stable, Niba takes great pleasure in the fighting and relishes any chance to get in the Ring.



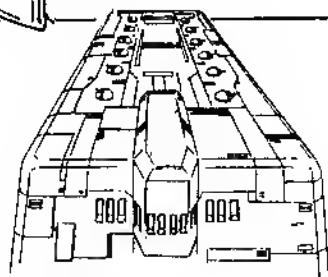
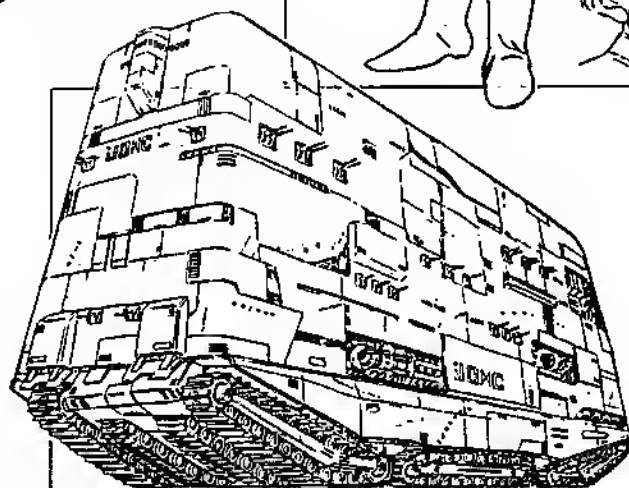
JIEL BOSUN

An officer in the Balalant Army charged with the supervision and observation of Niba's performance as the new Balalant super-soldier. Bosun is an egotistical, over-confident slave driver who has convinced himself that he holds full control over Niba and relishes any opportunity to prove his false superiority.



GARUMAN THOMAS

A scientist for the Gilgarneth Army who was an important member of Perfect Soldier Project. His diminutive size and mannerism belie a formidable intelligence, and he continues the study of Perfect Soldier technology for future application now that the war is about to begin again.



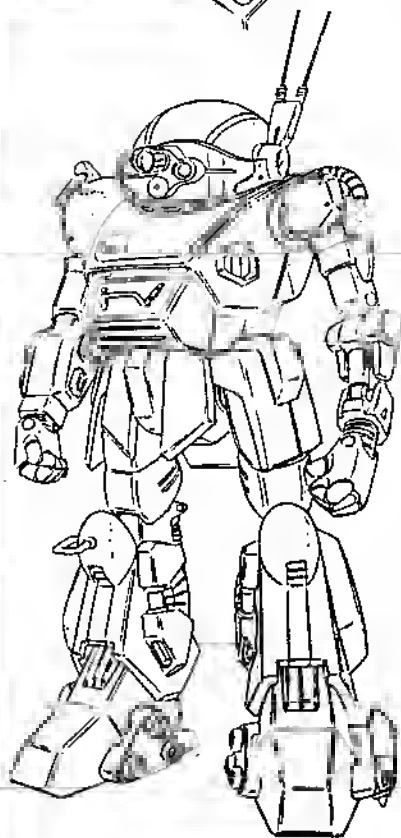
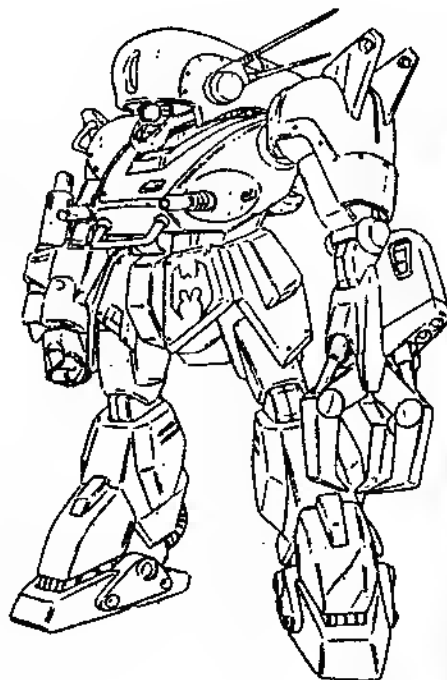
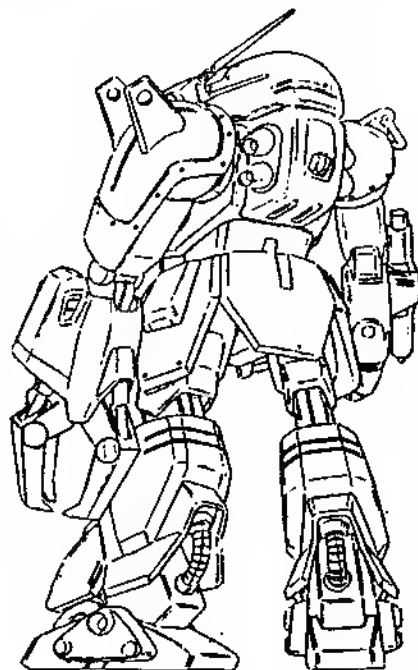
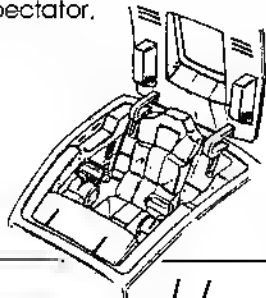
BALALANT LAND BATTLESHIP

A massive, lumbering dreadnaught used to crush opposition. One of these huge machines was abandoned near Aa Koba City on Merukia after a previous battle there, and the recent truce that brought the Hundred Year War to a close allowed Jiel Bosun's unit to take up secret residence in it for the development of their own Super Soldier.

ECRUBIS

B-ATH-XX (Experimental)

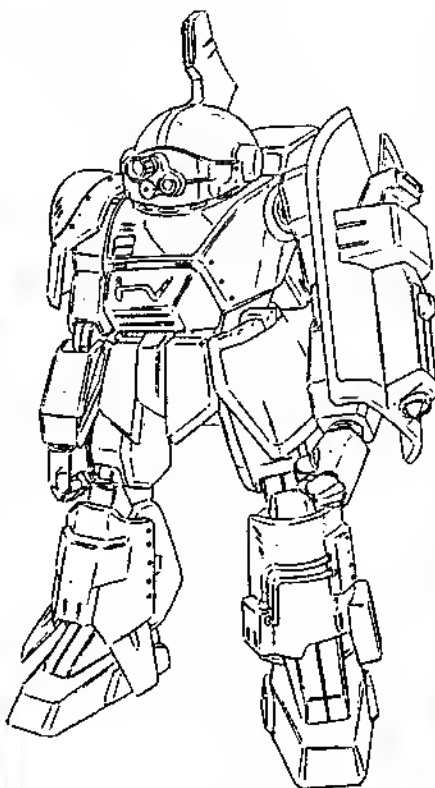
Known as 'Danger Melon' in the Aa Koba City Battle Ring, this is the eccentric, heavily customized A.T. of Rada Niba, whose bionic implants allow him to link directly into its computer systems, thus bypassing the mission disc process and turning the A.T. into an extension of Niba's own considerable abilities. Fashioned after Gilgamesh-based A.T.'s to conceal its Balalant origins, the Danger Melon has built a sinister reputation for itself in the Battle Ring, though its pilot has never been seen by any spectator.



LIGHT SCOPEDOG

ATM-09-LC (Light Custom)

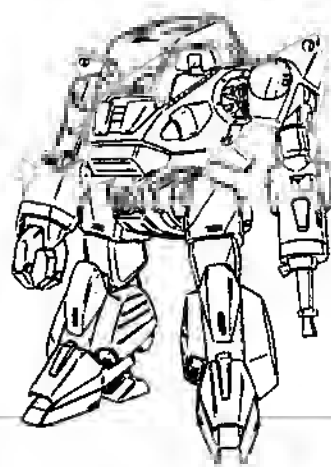
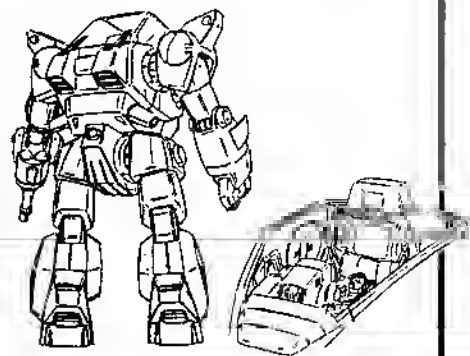
A standard Scopedog that is heavily stripped down and refitted by Chirico for use in the 'Big Battle' against Niba. Though this renders it slightly more vulnerable, it more than compensates in speed and agility, especially when operated by as skilled a pilot as Chirico Cuvie.



BERSERGA IMITATE

ATM-09-HC (Heavy Custom)

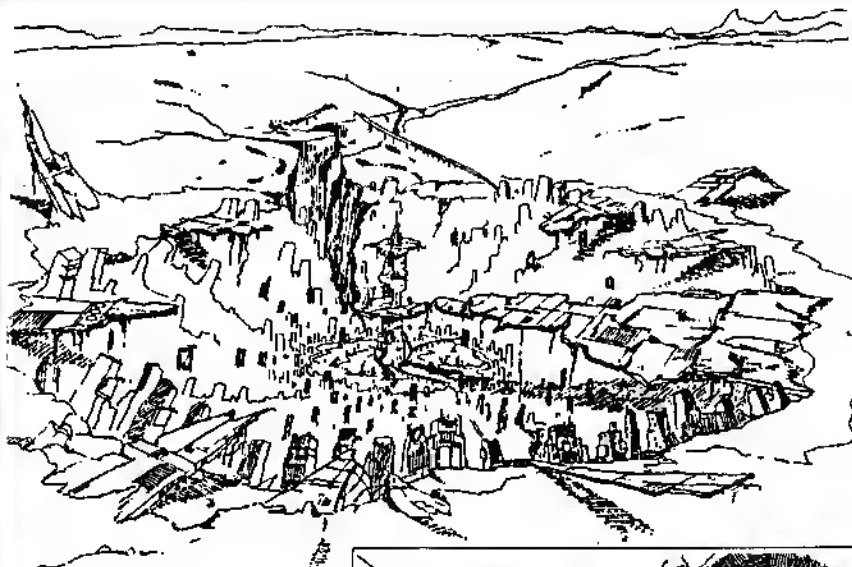
Preparing to aid Chirico in the 'Big Battle,' Lou Shako customizes another standard Scopedog to simulate a Berserga-series A.T. used by all Quentmen. This involves bolting heavy fairing and body shields onto the ATM-09 chassis, turning it into a massive counterpart to Chirico's light A.T.



BUSY CRAB

B-ATM-001-PT (Patrol Type)

A seldom-used Balalant A.T. built chiefly for policing purposes, though it can be used in limited combat. Its lightweight construction and all-glass canopy are inferior to the armament of even the lowest-class Gilgamesh A.T., however, so very few of them were seen on the battlefield.



Aa Koba

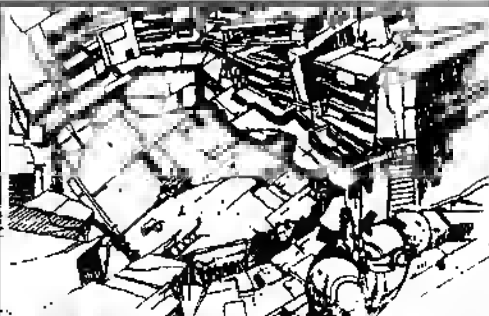
A neutral city located in a remote desert of planet Merukia. Its state of deterioration is similar to that of Uoodo, but this does not deter the population from existing there, which is mainly composed of low-lives and transients.



CHEROKEE CHIEF

One of Aa Koba's less scrupulous citizens, Cherokee is the head match-maker (a term for bout arranger) at the city's Battle Ring and often cleans up on brash newcomers anxious to claim Danger Melon's title. An acquaintance of Gotha's, Cherokee smells an opportunity when the older man's group returns to Merukia with a former Red Shoulder, and sets about arranging the 'Big Battle.'

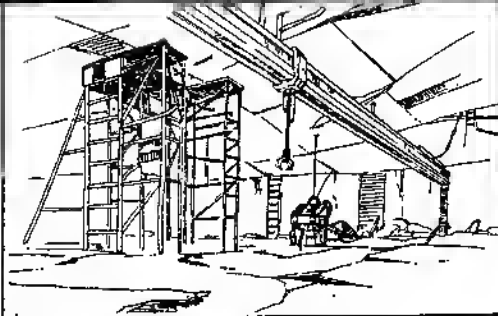
LOCALES



AA KOBA
CITY—BATTLE
RING ARENA



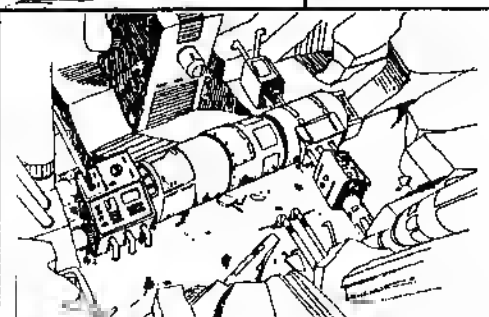
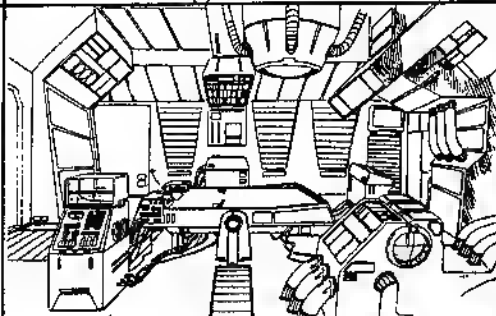
CHIRICO'S
HIDEOUT—
A.T. GARAGE



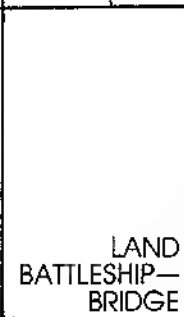
LAND
BATTLESHIP—
LABORATORY



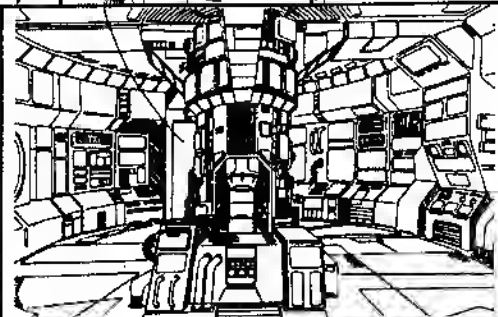
AA KOBA
CITY—
BATTLE RING
STADIUM



CHIRICO'S
HIDEOUT—
JIJIRIUM TUBE



LAND
BATTLESHIP—
BRIDGE





In the center of Aa Koba City, a round of Battle Ring is underway. Amid the noisy audience, Chirico Cuvie watches as a Scopedog pilot tussles with quite possibly the strangest A.T. ever built: Danger Melon.

The crowd roars its bloodthirsty delight as their local favorite easily evades the Scopedog's attacks and fires wanton bursts into the stands. Bruze Gotho picks up a now-ownerless gambling receipt that floats out of the pall of smoke. Lamenting the bad luck of its buyer, he turns to Chirico.

"So why did you come here? To ride an A.T. again? Don't tell me that's not the reason. All Battle Rings are like the war."

"Don't push him," Coconna protests. Gotho starts to yell back that he's only curious, but is distracted by a man who has approached Lou Shako standing nearby.

"I'd pay a lot for a Quentman!" "Hey, he's my pilot," Gotho shouts, but then recognizes the intruder: Cherokee Chief!



"You always did have an ear for money whenever I found a good fighter," Cherokee laughs.

"But neither him nor my Red Shoulder feel like fighting," says Gotho.

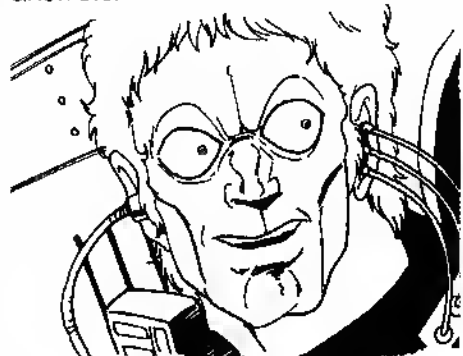
"You've got a real Red Shoulder?"

"If you can't tell just by looking, you're no matchmaker. But I can convince him to fight."

"If you pay enough," Cherokee answers, and a new roar from the crowd draws their attention back to the match, where the Danger Melon has decided to wrap things up, and savagely demolishes its opponent.

"Stop it," a referee radios, "we can still use that man!"

"Too late. It's over," the pilot answers.



"What a fighter," Gotho gasps.

"He's never been beaten," explains Cherokee. "But a Red Shoulder might be able to do it..."

And as the Battle Ring victor scans the cheering crowd, his A.T. lens locks onto one figure who only stares coldly back: Chirico.

Later, in the bridge of a gargantuan Balalant Land Battleship abandoned in the desert near Aa Koba, Jiel Bosun reports recent test results to his direct superior: Colonel Jan Paul Rochina.

"Our P.S. is ready," Bosun beams. "Niba is the best. But we need more data on emotional aspects of the Gilgameth P.S."

"We haven't acquired their technology yet," Rochina answers, "and war is on the verge of breaking out again."

But Bosun may have the answer: his spies have revealed two persons hiding in Aa Koba associated

with the Gilgameth Perfect Soldier Project. Rochina recognizes the first as Science Officer Garuman Thomas, who worked on the P.S. Project. But the second warrants more alert interest: Chirico!

Deducing that Thomas must have followed Chirico and the P.S. here, Rochina orders both Thomas and the P.S. captured, and for Niba to destroy Chirico in Battle Ring so as not to arouse suspicion.

Bosun answers that they have already taken steps to arrange a match, and Niba, who will perform the mission, assures his commander that Chirico will not survive.

Hidden in the depths of Aa Koba, Gotho and Cherokee haggle over the price a Red Shoulder should fetch in the Ring while Vanilla and Coconna watch Chirico tend his beloved Fyana. She has begun to weaken from lack of Jijirium, and Vanilla complains about how difficult it is to find here.

"Anyway," he adds testily, "if she's a real P.S., she shouldn't need any special treatment!"

Angered by his remark, Coconna gives him a vicious pinch, but he laughs it off nervously.

"I didn't mean it! We're friends! He knows I'm just kidding!"

But Chirico finds little humor here, and only says he is sorry for their trouble.

Vanilla pulls out a map of the city and explains that during the last Battle Ring, he learned of a group who bought out the last of the local Jijirium stock. The map gives the location of their hiding place, and with it Chirico can attack whenever he wishes.

Already having decided to go, Chirico takes the map and exits, passing Gotho and Cherokee, who still argue about Ring fees. They come to an agreement, but Gotho still doubts that Chirico will participate.

"That," Cherokee smirks, "is your department."

Chirico goes to their hideout's garage, where Lou Shako works on one of their dune buggies. Asking if he can be of any help, Shako

smiles when Chirico tosses him the keys and off they drive.

Hearing this, Gotho, Vanilla and Coconna jump up and rush to follow them in the other buggy, excited at the prospect of watching a good fight and grabbing good jijiium. Cherokee stays behind, reminding Gotho not to forget their deal.

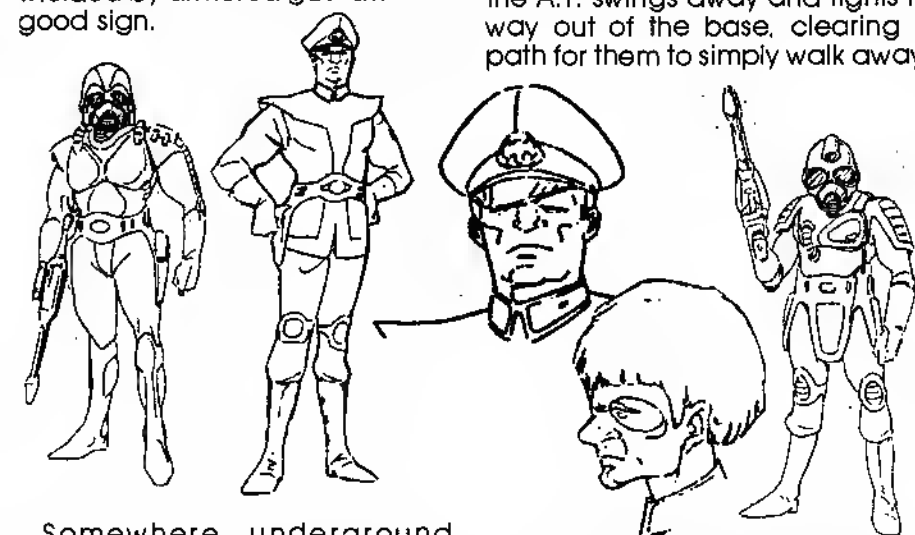
While Chirico and Shako use Vanilla's map to find their way into a subterranean maze, Cherokee receives an angry phone call from another of his clients: Jiel Bosun. Cherokee tries to explain the difficulty in setting up their match, so Bosun orders him to simply kidnap the woman Fyana. Then Chirico will fight.

"Who is she?"

"You don't need to know! Just do it!"

In Aa Koba, Gotho's group finds Chirico's buggy, but there is no sign of either him or Shako.

"What are you doing here," a voice demands, and the trio turns to look down the barrels of rifles welded by armored guards. Not a good sign.



Somewhere underground, Chirico and Shako are spotted and forced to fight the same type of guards. They succeed for the moment, but an elevator door slides open to reveal a bigger platoon...and a Gllgameth officer.

"We've been waiting for you," he smiles.

As night falls, a strangely-shaped machine approaches the location as Chirico and Shako are reunited with Gotho and the others...In a cell. They try to

apologize, but out from behind them steps Garuman Thomas.

"Chirico Cuvie...where have you hidden the P.S.? I should know...the jijiium withdrawal symptoms must be serious. I might be able to help."

"I have a question," Chirico barks. "Is it possible for the P.S. to be changed back into a normal human?"

"Possibly," Thomas offers. "I might be able to try if you will trust me."

But before Chirico can answer, an explosion thunders through the building--Niba has attacked! Slamming through a unit of Strike-dogs, the insidious Danger Melon appears in the door of the cell and instantly lashes out to scoop up Thomas in its huge claw.

Chirico stands ready as the pilot pops his hatch and looks dangerously at him.

"You are Chirico Cuvie," Niba growls. "I'll kill you later...in Battle Ring!"

The group watches, stunned, as the A.T. swings away and fights its way out of the base, clearing a path for them to simply walk away.

explains the situation to the others, only drawing accusatory looks.

"You're cooperating," Coconna exclaims.

"Of course I'm not! Do really think I'm that kind of man?"

"YES!"

Chirico, on the other hand, believes the older man and asks where they might have taken Fyana.

"The Land Battleship," he answers sheepishly.

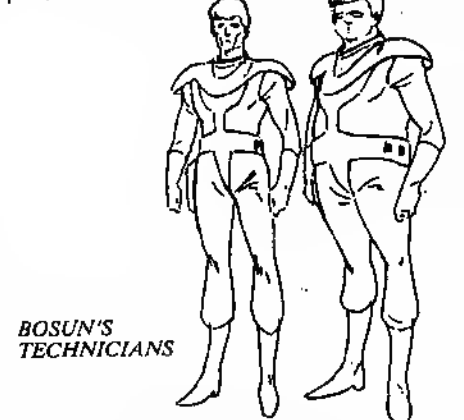
"That thing's still active," Vanilla balks.

"It survived the war. It's being used as their base. We must attack it. It's the only way."



"We'll need a helicopter," Chirico begins, "and two Dog-type A.T.'s..."

In the laboratory of the Battleship, Bosun presides over a new testing of Niba's condition. The technicians are nervous about the power levels being pumped into him, observing that after working a straight 200 hours, almost no strength was lost, and that mass-production of these soldiers is now possible.



BOSUN'S TECHNICIANS

"Too optimistic," Bosun replies. "There is still the matter of emotional stability. We need to study

But upon returning to their hide-out, they get a bigger shock: Fyana is gone. They are at a loss of what to do when a nearby phone pack buzzes. Cherokee is on the other end and Gotho greets him furiously.

"We've got her," Cherokee begins. "Now don't be mad. I'm just helping everything along. Our arrangement stands. Ready to fight?"

Gotho hangs up and helplessly

the Gilgamesh P.S. thought patterns. Bring him back to normal."

The power feed is stopped, and Niba sits up from the table, asking if he may now enjoy another Battle Ring.

"No," Bosun answers. "Our mission here is over and we have new orders. We are to return with the P.S."

"I want to fight," Niba protests.

"We must follow our orders," Bosun shouts back.

"No! I enjoy fighting! I enjoy killing!"

The tension climbs for a moment, but eases when Bosun backs down.

"All right. I understand."

"Then I can go and fight?"

"I'll talk to the Colonel. Now relax," Niba lays back, and Bosun swiftly clamps his arms and legs down.



"Now we will continue this discussion," Bosun declares triumphantly.

In the hideout, Chirico's group goes to work on two Scopedogs. While Chirico begins stripping down his A.T., Shako beefs up another, and they pause as a helicopter hovers in overhead.

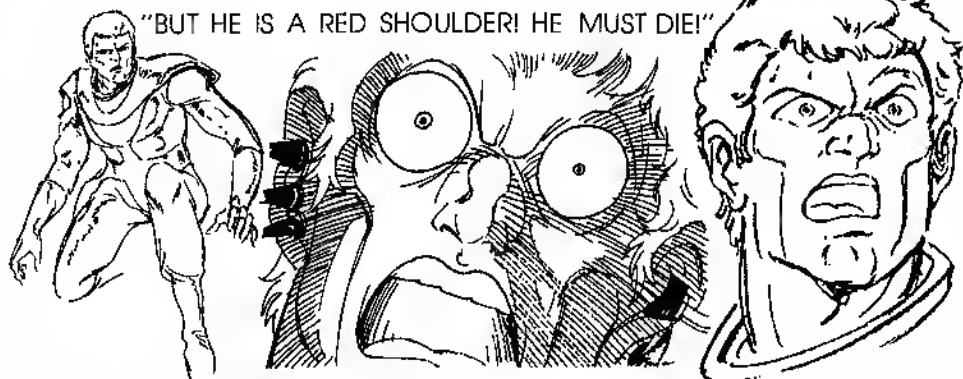
"Second order strategist Vanilla Vartla, reporting for duty!"

Niba's body trembles with pain from the energy being dumped into his bionics while Bosun shouts new commands over the electric din.

"The devices in your body can be controlled by the enemy! We will return to headquarters!"

"No," Niba insists, "I won't!"

"You are a Balant Soldier! You must obey!"



Niba's tortured mind flashes over the searing moment of his near-death at the hands of a Red Shoulder platoon. The pain of his memory and the energy feed build together until he can take no more—and he bursts out of his bonds to leap toward Bosun and grab the officer around the head!

"Your brain needs an operation," Bosun pleads. "For that we need Gilgamesh P.S. technology! FOLLOW YOUR ORDERS!!"

"NO," Niba bellows, viciously crushing the man's skull. "NO! NO! NO!"

Niba lets Bosun's body slide to the floor and turns to the two technicians.

"From now on, you will follow MY orders...or end up like him!"

"This A.T. is naked," scoffs Vanilla at Chirico's lightened Scopedog. "One bullet will finish it!"

Gotho starts to protest, but jumps down in anger when Cherokee boldly strides into the hideout. Ready to throttle him, Gotho is nevertheless placated by Cherokee's disarming words.

"I don't think I did anything wrong. Now both our problems are solved. The P.S. is still safe, only her location has changed. And I did provide your helicopter."



Gotho fires a glare at Vanilla, who shrugs and points out that any intown connection would have led them back to Cherokee anyway.

"Well, the last thing now," Cherokee concludes, "is to paint that A.T.'s shoulder."

Gotho and Vanilla glance toward Chirico, shocked by the implication. They turn back to Cherokee, but stop when they realize Chirico has already thought of it and methodically sprays red paint on the Scopedog's shoulderpod.

"His face," Gotho gasps, "it's like the first time we met him!"

Indeed, a cold machine now exists where Chirico was, and he realizes it as well.

"Fyana...I'm bringing myself back to a Red Shoulder. Once again, I must kill or be killed."

On the Balant Battleship, Fyana rests, still weak, under a beam of jilrium energy that keeps her from fading. Niba strides in and Thomas, controlling the flow, rushes to stop his advance. It is the miniscule scientist's last act.

"Because of you," Niba sneers at her, "my mind was almost taken away!"

Her screams fill the room as he drags her away...

The citizens of Aa Koba gather at the edge of the desert to watch the biggest Battle Ring of their lives, lured by Cherokee's announcement that they are free to bet their stakes until ten minutes after the fight begins.

"They don't look like Red Shoulders," one spectator protests, eyeing Gotho's group.

"Then bet on the Battleship! Ten

to one!"

"Are you sure it can even move?"

On the bridge, Niba sits in a control chair as the techs connect various cables to his bionic components. He can now operate the entire vehicle just like his A.T.

"Then the ship is part of my body. Where is the woman P.S.?"

"Where you commanded."

A switch is thrown, and Niba's eyes light up as all systems activate and hum with power. Deciding the technicians have served their purpose, he unceremoniously murders both of them and awaits his new battle.

A flare from Cherokee signals the beginning, and the vehicles of Chirico's unit roll out toward the silent mammoth in the desert. But it remains silent no more! It rumbles to life and lurches forward, all guns opening up on the attackers!

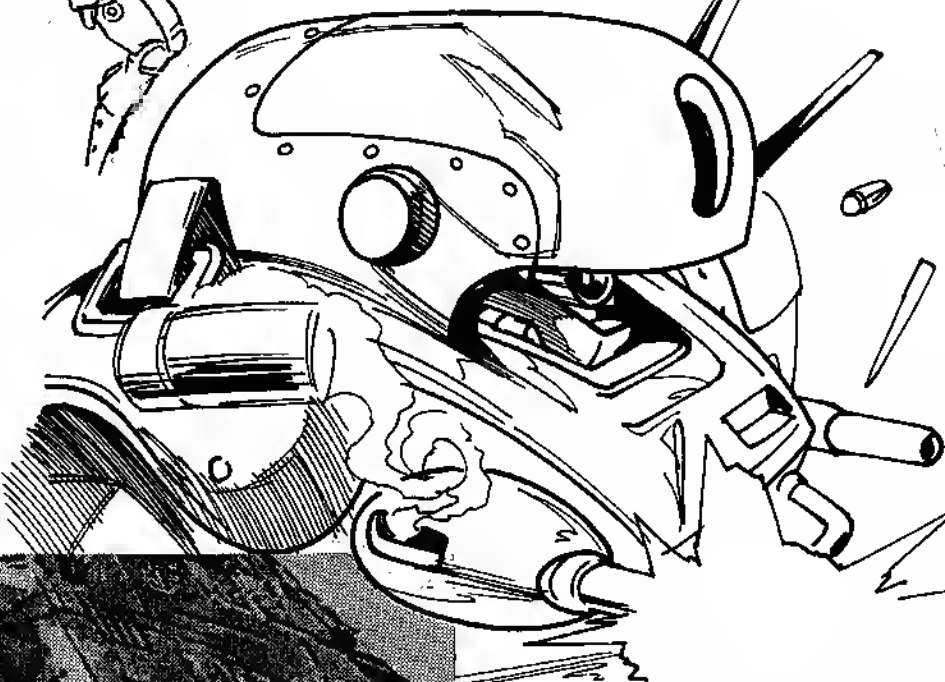
Riding one of the buggies with Coonna, Chirico directs her around to the side of the leviathan, where Gotho fires a grappling cable far up onto its flank. Latching on, Chirico ascends and clings to the side of the lumbering monster.

Far below, Shako's A.T. reaches the prow of the Battleship. Grabbing hold, the Quentman blasts

away at its huge treads, but causes only minimal damage.

Evading cannonfire and blowing a hole in the side of the vehicle, Chirico sneaks inside. But Niba observes his progress and prepares his next weapon.

"We can't see anything," crowd members protest to Cherokee. "What's going on?"



Inside, Chirico has become a target again, chased by a Busy Crab A.T. Jumping from one hiding place to another, he finally gets it in his gunsights--and spots Fyana bound inside, Niba controlling the machine by remote!

"This is boring," another spectator complains.

"You're an amateur," Cherokee retorts. "This is the Big Battle! This will be history!"

Ducking out of Niba's view, Chirico deftly conceals himself above the A.T. holding Fyana and leaps down, crashing through its canopy to free her.



His plan defeated, Niba disconnects himself from the ship and heads for his own A.T. while below, Shako finally tears an opening in the underbelly of the Battleship and begins to make his way upward.

Chirico and Fyana also ascend on an elevator lift, planting a bomb on the way. They reach the top and fire off a flare to signal Vanilla's helicopter. He descends, bringing with him Chirico's Scopedog and exchanging it for Fyana just in time--for nearby, Danger Melon emerges and moves into the attack!

The crowd roars its approval as the Big Battle begins in kind. Niba's

machine takes huge, powerful swipes at Chirico, whose lightened Scopedog is nigh-impossible to hit.

Eventually, however, Niba pins him and prepares to land his favorite death blow...when he gets a full-on view of the red shoulderpod and freezes just long enough for Chirico to plant a grenade and twist out from under the Danger Melon.

"You're a real Red Shoulder," Niba laughs. "One of the best!"

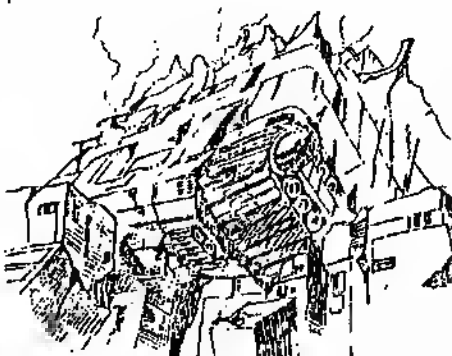
But as he plunges toward Chirico again, Shako arrives and joins the fray. The bomb planted earlier detonates, sending a violent shudder through the entire Battleship. The beast swerves and changes direction, now pointing toward Aa Koba, where Cherokee has his hands full trying to convince everyone they are in no danger.

His glee now replaced by solid anger, Niba rushes Chirico, no longer pleased by their contest. In one smooth move, Chirico spins around behind him and wraps his Scopedog's arm around Danger Melon's midsection. Shako charges in to do the same, both of them immobilizing their enemy by locking down their braking pins.

Vanilla swings his helicopter over the exploding Battleship, lowering a ladder for the two victors to fly them off as the vehicle plows right into the heart of the city! Sealed in his A.T.'s cockpit, Niba hammers desperately at the



hatch, screaming death threats...and one final, ultimate explosion silences him forever.



As the people of Aa Koba dig themselves out of the rubble, Chirico stands statue-like on a cliff,

casting his gaze over the destruction. While his friends recover, he pulls his dog tags out one last time.

"Merukian Division Special Forces, 24th Detachment, X-1, Chirico Cuvie. I was a Red Shoulder. But what does it matter now?"

He flings the tags, and his past, far away and turns to Fyana, who is tended by a lighthearted Coonna.

"I'm sorry. This was all because of me."

"Never mind," the street girl answers, "That's what friends are for."



ALWAYS YOU

(End Title)

Series Staff

Presented by Nippon Sunrise

Original Story & Directed by

Ryosuke Takahashi

Character Design: Norio Shioyama

Mechanical Design: Kunio Okawara

Music: Hiroki Inui

Screenplay by: Ryosuke Takahashi

Toshi Gobu

Soji Yoshikawa

Jinzo Toriyumi

Chief Director of Animation:

Norio Shioyama

Director of Sound: Yasuo Uragami

Art Director

Toshihisa Tojo (episodes 1-28)

Kazuo Okada

Mitsuharu Miyamae

Masuo Nakayama (episodes 29-52)

Chief Director: Toshifumi Takizawa

Design Advancement: Koichi Inoue

Producer: Toru Hasegawa

When I am lonely...or even when I'm sad
The one I see before me is always you.
When I am all alone and wish to be with you
The one I'd want beside me is always you.

Even if we are far apart or
If we part ourselves with a farewell
The light of this world is dazzling
Like the day I saw you...

Even on rainy mornings or on windy nights
The one who comes to my mind is always you
When I am all alone and wish to be with you
The one I'd want beside me is always you

Even if we are far apart or
If we part ourselves with a farewell
The light of this world is dazzling
Like the day I saw you...

Lyrics by Ryosuke Takahashi/Translation by Earnest Migaki

APPENDIX

BROADCAST HISTORY/FULL MEDIA RECORD

1983

- 4/1: "Armored Trooper Votoms" TV series debut
- 4/21: 45rpm single released for opening title song:
"Destiny of the Flame" (King Records)
- 7/21: First BGM album released on LP:
"Votoms at Uoodo" (King Records)
- 10/18: Kodansha Comics publishes first manga
volume by Minoru Nonaka
- 10/21: Second BGM album released on LP:
"Votoms at Kummen" (King Records)
- 11/7: First boxed adventure game released by
Takara; "Plotter's City Uoodo"
- 12/18: Kodansha Comics publishes second manga
volume by Minoru Nonaka

1984

- 1/31: Votoms 'Mook' published while series is still in
initial broadcast (Mook: Magazine/Book)
- 2/11: Third BGM album released on LP; "Outer Space"
- 2/18: Kodansha Comics publishes third manga
volume by Minoru Nonaka
- 2/23: TV series concludes its initial broadcast
- 3/17: Kodansha Comics publishes fourth manga
volume by Minoru Nonaka
- 4/21: Fourth BGM album released on LP:
"The Music of Votoms" (King Records)
- 9/15: Tokuma Shoten publishes Roman Album 63:
"Armored Trooper Votoms"

1985

- 6/21: First video collection "Story of Votoms" released
by Toshiba; 60 min. compilation of series
- 6/29: First "Blue Knight" novel published by Sonorama;
"Blue Knight Berserga" by Masanori Hama
- 7/20: Second video collection "Highlights of Votoms"
released by Toshiba; 60 min. video index
- 8/21: "The Last Red Shoulder" OAV released by
Toshiba; first 60 minute Original Anime Video
- 9/30: Second "Blue Knight" novel published by
Sonorama; "Blue Knight Berserga II" by M. Hama
- 11/20: "Votoms Odyssey" published by OUT Magazine

1986

- 2/21: Third video collection "Uoodo" released by
Toshiba; 60 min. compilation. New opening title
sequence with live-action model photography
- 3/7: Second boxed adventure game released by
Takara; "Red Shoulder"
- 4/5: Fourth video collection "Kummen" released by
Toshiba; 60 min. compilation. New title
sequence with live-action model photography
- 5/30: Third "Blue Knight" novel published by
Sonorama; "K" by Masanori Hama
- 6/21: First BGM album released on CD:
"Votoms at Uoodo" (King Records)
- 6/7: Third boxed adventure game released by
Takara; "Civil War" (Kummen scenario)
- 7/5: "Big Battle" OAV released by Toshiba;

second 60-minute Original Anime Video

- 7/21: Second BGM album released on CD:
"Votoms at Kummen" (King Records)
- 8/1: Hobby Japan Magazine publishes
"Armored Trooper Votoms" special
- 8/2: "Red Shoulder Event" promotional tour for OAV
- 8/21: Third BGM album on CD; "Outer Space"
- 1987
- 2/10: Hobby Japan Magazine publishes
"Blue Knight Berserga" special
- 2/28: Animate Hobby Store chain publishes
"Armored Trooper Votoms" Mook
- 7/31: Fourth "Blue Knight" novel published by
Sonorama; "Screaming Knight" by Masanori Hama
- 8/5: Fourth BGM album released on CD:
"The Music of Votoms" (King Records)
- 9/10: Publication of Votoms adventure game book

1988

- 1/23: Fifth video collection "Sunsu" released by
Toshiba; 60 min. compilation.
Features new animation in opening title
- 2/20: Sixth video collection "Quent" released by
Toshiba; 60 min. compilation.
Features new animation in opening title
- 3/19: "Roots of Treachery" OAV released by Toshiba;
third 60 min. Original Anime Video
- 3/21: "unknown Chirico's Story" drama album
released on LP and CD (King Records)
- 6/30: "Roots of Treachery" novelization published:
"First Red Shoulder" by Soji Yoshikawa
- 7/1: Hobby Japan Magazine publishes
"Blue Knight Berserga II" special
- 11/21: "Armored Hunter Mellorink" OAV series debuts;
opening title "Soldier Blue" released on CD single
- 12/21: "Destiny of the Flame" released on CD single
- 12/31: "Last Red Shoulder" novelization published

1989

- 1/21: "Armored Hunter Mellorink" BGM album/LP & CD
- 3/31: "Armored Hunter Mellorink" novelization
- 4/28: "Armored Hunter Mellorink" OAV series ends
- 10/20: Bandai publishes Entertainment Bible No. 5:
"Armored Trooper Votoms"
- 12/8: Votoms computer game "Black Unicorn"
released

1990

- 10/26: Toshiba releases "Votoms Perfect Collection"
on Laserdisc; boxed set of 52 television episodes
- 1991
- 3/10: "Merukia Event"; publicity campaign for release
of "Votoms Perfect Collection"
- 3/24: Toshiba releases all 52 Votoms episodes on VHS
- 6/7: Votoms computer game "Dead Ash" released
- 7/26: Toshiba releases "Votoms Best Collection" on
Laserdisc; boxed set of all 9 video releases and 30
minute documentary; "Votoms Confidential"

BIBLIOGRAPHY

The following books were used as source material for all of the art and much of the story research that went into this guide. Few other anime programs have been the subject of this amount of publication, let alone several years after original broadcast. The world of VOTOMS is constructed to serve many story scenarios beyond the series itself, and this is reflected in the exceptional creativity exhibited in this library.

ROMAN ALBUM 63

SHOGAKUKAN PUBLISHING, 1984; 138 pgs.

'Roman Album' is the term for a series of books published by Shogakukan in Japan. Each volume covers a specific anime series or film, and Volume 63 was the first all-VOTOMS book to be released. This volume is a tremendous compendium of information. It features 42 pages of color stills, a hefty section of character and mecha art, and complex alignment charts that inspired those in this guide.

VOTOMS ODYSSEY

OUT MAGAZINE SPECIAL, 1985; 154 pgs.

Whereas the Roman Album concentrates entirely on the TV series, ODYSSEY goes a step beyond the anime to provide an intriguing look at the world of VOTOMS, including a lengthy article on the history of the 100 Year War and the development of the A.T.

This book was published to coincide with the release of THE LAST RED SHOULDER, and was the first to feature an in-depth color breakdown of the story and character art. Series coverage is here as well, although not as extensively as in the Roman Album, but the package is rounded out by an interesting piece on Gilgamesh and Balalant Army composition and interviews with the VOTOMS creative staff.

Finally, this was also the first publication that detailed Quent history and the Quent Mutants, which was notably absent from the Roman Album; the first attempt to delve into the past of the series storyline rather than its current situations.



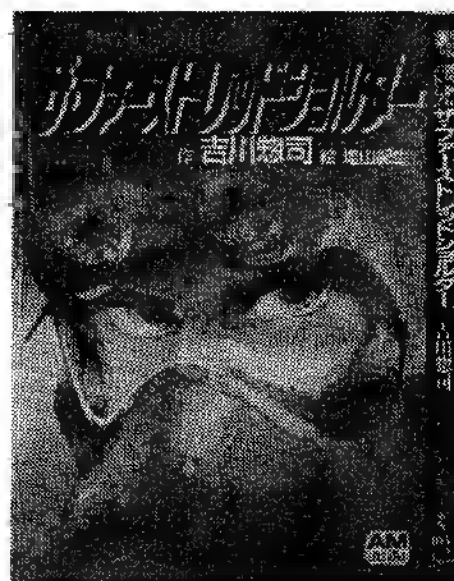
MANGA ADAPTATION

KODANSHA COMICS "Comic BonBon", 4 VOLUMES

In Japan, weekly comics are commonplace. From time to time, animated programs would be adapted into manga and serialized. Such was the case with VOTOMS in Kodansha's TV ANIME MAGAZINE. The artist, Minoru Nonaka, expanded and redrew material to fill the four volumes pictured here.

Since the readership of this manga is composed mainly of children, the character art is drawn somewhat softer than the anime version, giving it a childlike appearance. Nonaka's art-style, for instance, vastly differs from character designer Norio Shioyama; so it is not uncommon for the look of a character to alter drastically from panel to panel, especially when Nonaka uses Shioyama's animation drawings in a scene. The mecha designs fare a bit better, given that the latitude for interpretation is much narrower where robots are concerned.

Perhaps the most helpful feature of the manga is that, intended for children, much of the dialogue is written in simplified kanji, which provides excellent translation practice for those seeking an anime-oriented lesson forum.

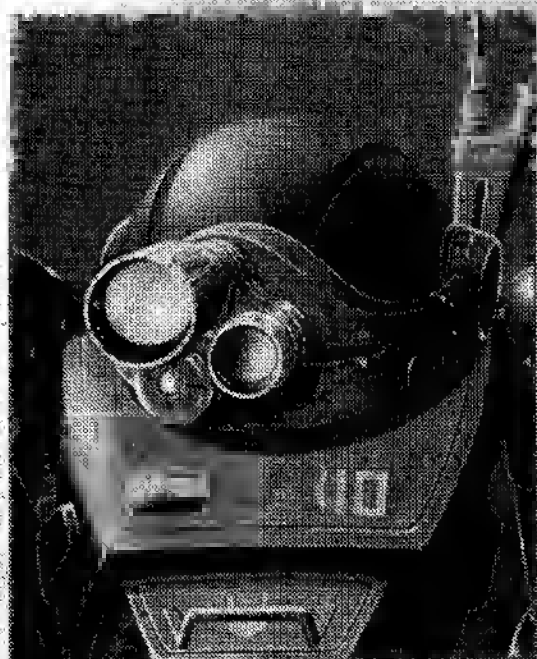


AM JU JU NOVELS

ANIMAGE MAGAZINE, 1988

After the release of ROOTS OF TREACHERY, the writer of that OAV, Soji Yoshikawa, penned a novelization titled FIRST RED SHOULDER, which was soon followed by the companion volume, LAST RED SHOULDER, his earlier video effort. Because they were published subsequent to the video releases, there is very little new material in them, but both feature illustrations by Norio Shioyama. His art in the FIRST RED SHOULDER novel was reproduced in Part 2 of this guide. (Interestingly enough, FIRST RED SHOULDER was the working title for that OAV).

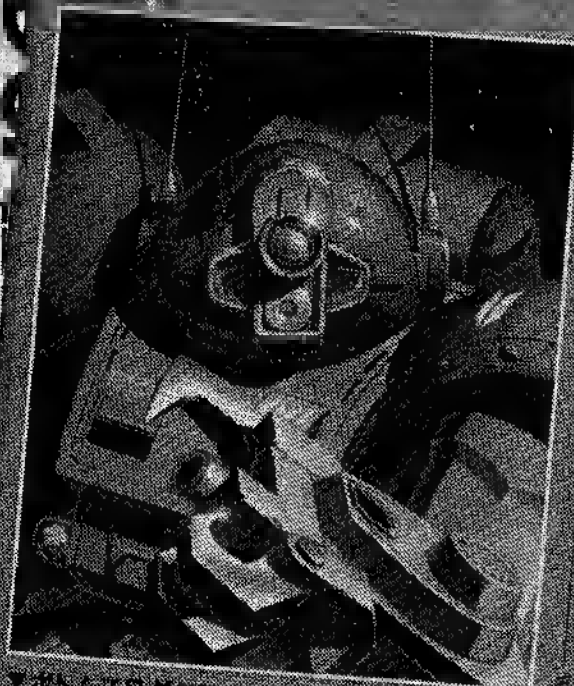




DM3キャラクタープラス1

- ▼ダグラムティオラマ特集PART Ⅲ
- ▼スクランブルエリア88
- ▼クラッシャージョウ
- ▼緊急特集/装甲騎兵ボトムズ

第4号



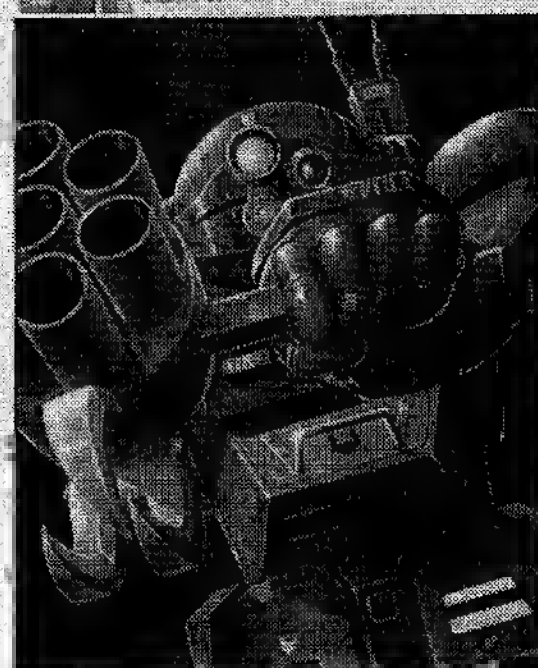
- ▼ボトムズ版ダグラムティオラマ
- ▼アイオコウ機解説
- ▼緊急特集/装甲騎兵ボトムズ

DUAL MAGAZINE



ボトムズSAK発売記念号

2D・3D4色へのアニメ・デカリング・コミュニケーション
を追求するトールムービーブック



総合ホビー情報満載!

- ▼ボトムズティオラマ登場
- ▼ダグラムオリジナル3Dフォト
- ▼ボトムズシミュレーションゲーム
- ▼チョロQダグラム

第6号

DUAL MAGAZINE

HOBBI'S MANUAL #208

ホビーのニューワールド「デュアルマガジン」

AUTUMN 1982 No.6

DUAL MAGAZINE

TAKARA CORP., 12 issues, 1982-1985

Originally created as a publicity base for two of Takara's major sponsorships, CRUSHER JOE and DOUGRAM, DUAL was in publication when VOTOMS first aired, and over several issues examined the series as its popularity and detailing increased. From a smattering of TV-based articles in issues 4 and 5, DUAL evolved into a major forum for VOTOMS information developed by the series creators and later legitimized by subsequent publishing efforts.

By its final issue, DUAL had run VOTOMS wargame scenarios, a lengthy series of articles on A.T. technology featuring the mechanical lineage chart reproduced elsewhere in this appendix and mecha designs for dozens of early (and concurrent) A.T.'s never seen in the program.

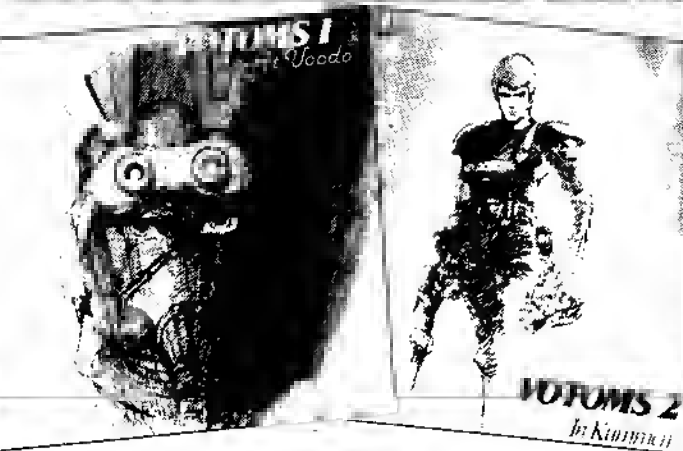
This technical history and the modelling efforts that came with it inspired the first VOTOMS sequel, a series of short stories called BLUE KNIGHT BERSERGA, which are also discussed elsewhere in this appendix.



MODELLERS MATERIAL SERIES

HOBBY JAPAN, 1986; 104 Pgs.

As Japan's premiere modelling magazine, HOBBY JAPAN has published many VOTOMS features over the years, given impetus by the wide range of modelling possibilities for the Armored Troopers, from the battlefield to the Battle Ring. Many of those articles, and a good deal of new material, were compiled into this special edition, covering store-bought and scratch-built A.T. kits, assorted vehicles, and the first collection of art from the BIG BATTLE video.



SOUNDTRACK ALBUMS

STAR CHILD MUSIC PUBLISHERS

To date, five individual volumes of soundtrack music have been released, both on LP and compact disc. A notable feature of the music, composed by Inui Hiroki, is its deceptive simplicity. Hiroki seldom used more than three instruments on any track, yet shifted the audible space around for the listener to fill the holes.

UODOO (Vol. 1) features opening and closing titles performed by the group TETSU, KUMMEN (Vol. 2) and OUTER SPACE (Vol. 3) contain series music, MUSIC OF (Vol. 4) is an interesting jazz/pop remix of certain tracks, and UNKNOWN CHIRICO'S STORY (Vol. 5) is drama with music from the last OAV.

ANIMATE SPECIAL

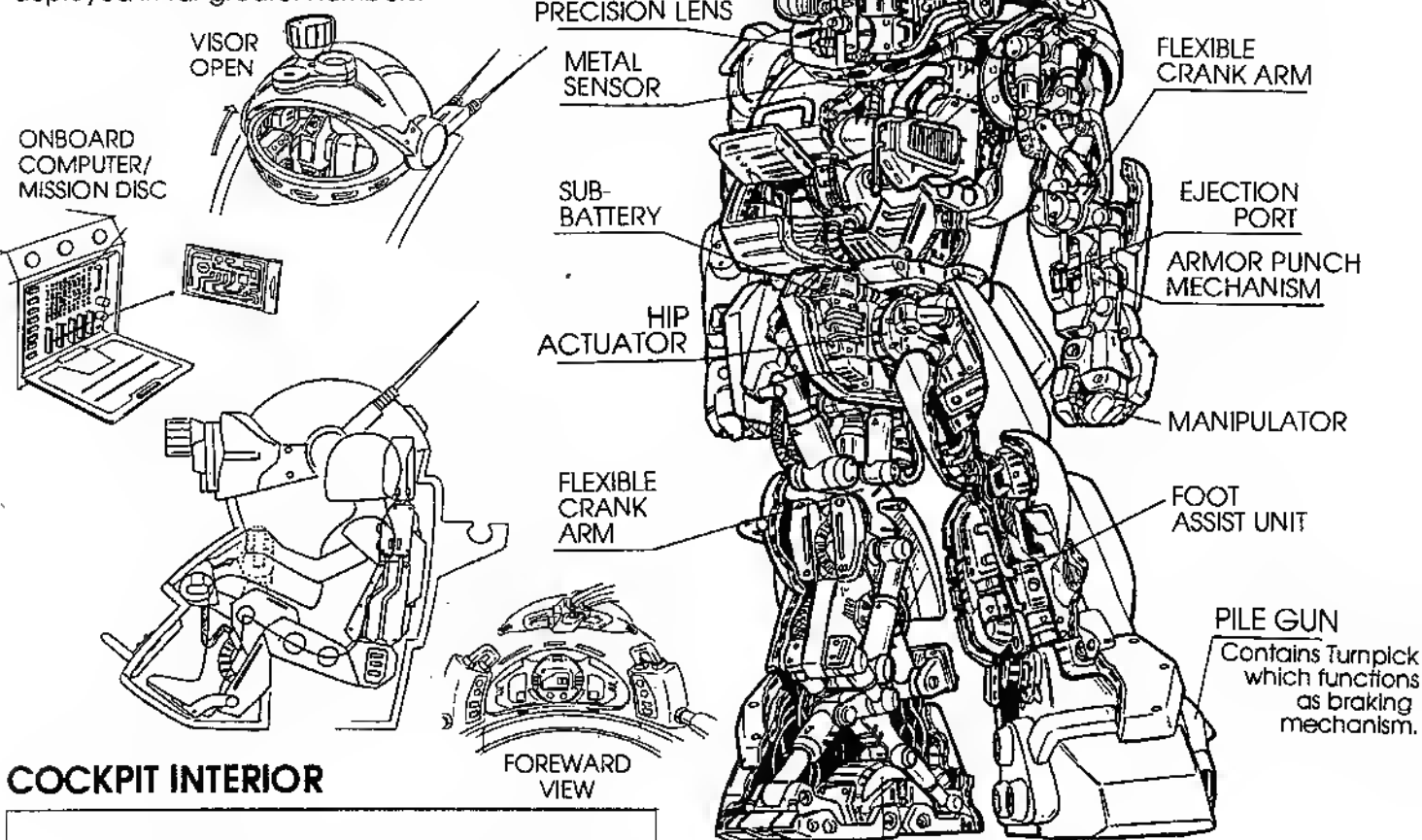
MOVIC PUBLISHING, 1987; 124 pgs.

ANIMATE is a chain of specialty shops for anime products similar in setup to FORBIDDEN PLANET stores in America and England, also funding occasional publishing efforts such as this one. This is a virtual encyclopedia, compiling episodic collections of character, background, and mechanical art seen in the TV series and the first two OAV's. It is an excellent reference, and the only book so far to print an episode-by-episode sequence of artwork, not to mention various area maps, charts, and assorted reference lists in their most concise form.

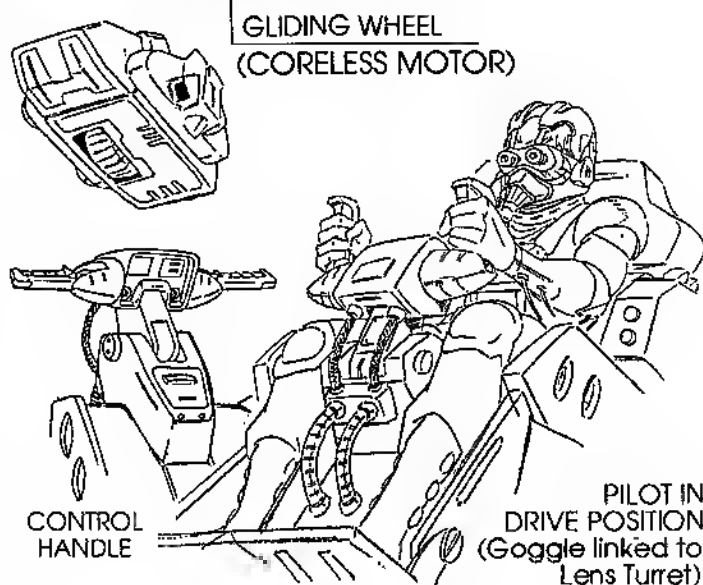
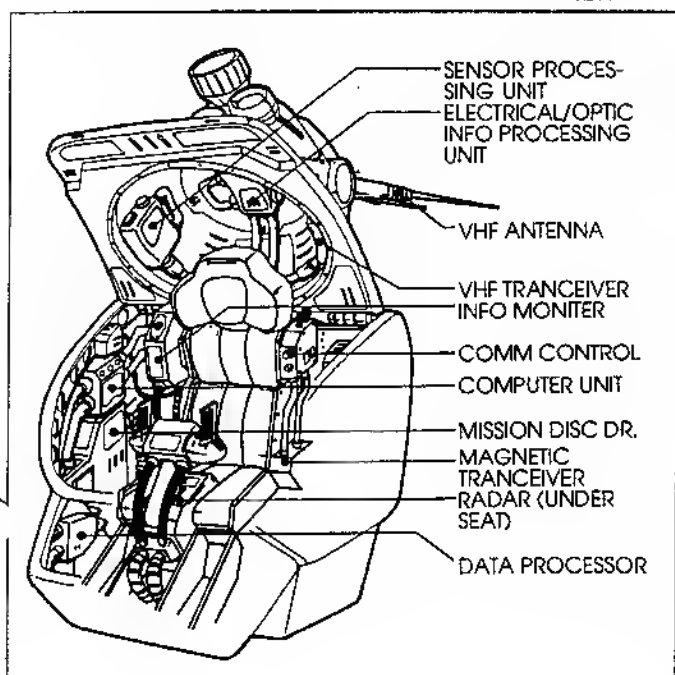
ARMORED TROOPER TECHNOLOGY

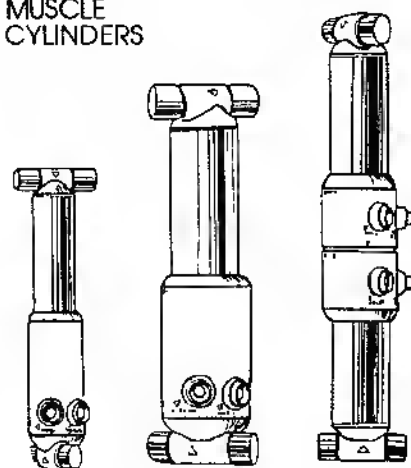
ATM-09-ST SCOPEDOG

Central to both the VOTOMS storyline and the genesis of the entire A.T. line is the ATM-09-ST "Scopedog," owing to its versatility. This unit is the epitome of A.T. technology as developed by the Gilgameh, for although some of its contemporaries are more powerful, the Scopedog contains all the most basic features in one streamlined package. Thus, its makeup set the standards for later models and it is deployed in far greater numbers.

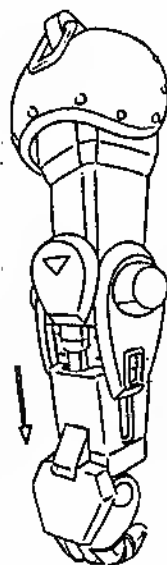
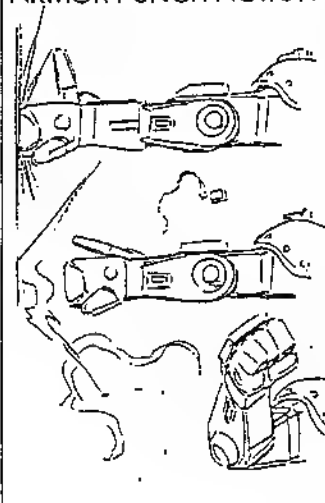
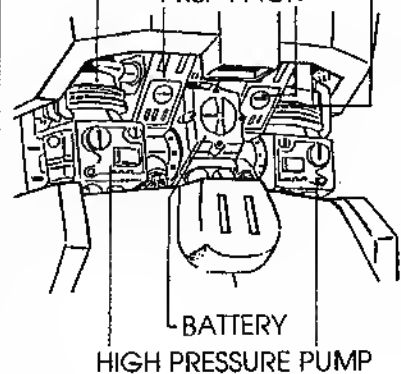


COCKPIT INTERIOR



MUSCLE
CYLINDERS

ARMOR PUNCH ACTION

VARIABLE COMPRESSOR
PRSP PACK

INTERNAL SYSTEMS

Integral to the Scopedog's operation is a combination of technologies that, for all intents and purposes, mimics the kinetics of the human body. Electrical power that is generated by the battery (which also runs the onboard computer and sensor array) is fed to the *Muscle Cylinders*, which extend and contract to motivate the arms and legs, creating torsion similar to that of organic muscles. Electricity generated by this activity is fed back into the battery.

This is the system that makes possible the *Armored Punch*. Muscle Cylinders in the forearm, assisted by gas-filled cartridges, extend at high velocity, thrusting the forearm structure forward with tremendous force. The exhausted cartridge is ejected, a new one takes its place from the magazine, and the action can repeat.

Performance of the Muscle Cylinder is maintained by the circulation system. *Polymer Ring Solution* is pumped through-

out the A.T.'s limbs by the *Variable Compressor*, which is analogous to a human heart pumping blood to the musculature. The solution periodically breaks down and must be replaced. The length of *Liquid Fuel Replacement Time* often dictates the class of the A.T. and its field capability.

Improvements to the internal systems are contingent on extending the active life of the liquid, necessitating larger circulation systems and heavier A.T.'s.

SENSORS

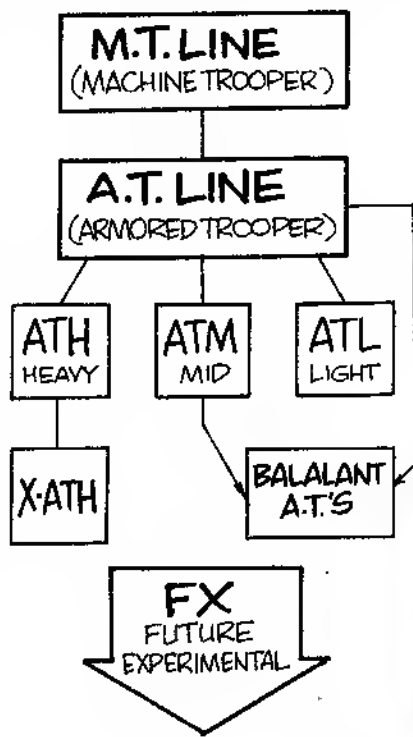
The Scopedog's passive sensors include metal detection, infra-red, electromagnetic, and image and sound processing. Active systems, which emit pulses instead of merely receiving them, are radar, sonar, and a jirium-powered vibration/pulse generator. High performance A.T.'s are equipped with a multi-pulse doppler system, which is far more sensitive and can better serve someone with Perfect Soldier abilities, such as Ypsilon.

FRAME STRUCTURE

Whereas the limbs of the Scopedog are powered by Muscle Cylinders, conventional motors operate the hands, feet, and major joints, such as the neck and waist. The internal electrical system is mounted on the stable elements of the framework, as opposed to the muscle cylinders which change in value during operation. Crank Arms physically attach the limbs to the body.

A.T. DEVELOPMENT

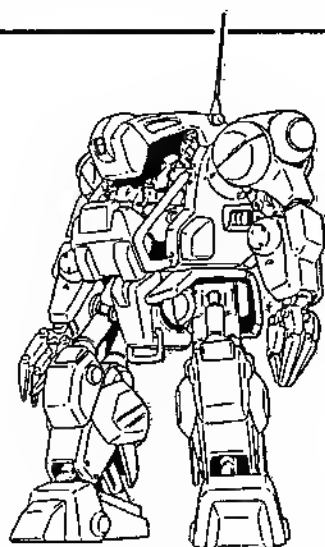
To the right is a simplified "family tree" depicting the class structure of A.T. technology. The Gilgameth army began with the land-based Mechanical Trooper, which lead to the spaceworthy Armored Trooper. The advent of the turret lens and the refining of liquid fuel circulation defined the heavy, medium, and light classes. Balalant A.T. development keyed off this stage as well. Quent's "Berserger" A.T.'s developed independently but used similar systems.



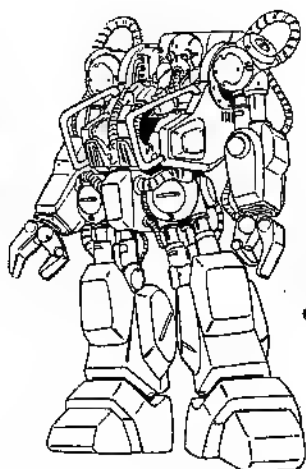
GENERATION OF ARMORED TROOPER

To those familiar with the attention to detail inherent in most Japanese animation programs, it will come as no surprise to learn that the development of VOTOMS mecha goes far beyond what is apparent in the animation. So versatile was the designation system of the A.T.'s that it naturally lent itself to expansion in other mediums, most notably the TAKARA-sponsored DUAL MAGAZINE. In a series of articles called GENERATION OF A.T., the history of the mecha was crafted in exquisite detail to highlight not only the Armored Troopers featured in the program, but also those that preceded them, contemporary models not seen in the animation, and even speculation on which models would have come next. Featured on the next four pages are the robots that were developed in this context. A comparison with the mecha guide back in Part One of this book will demonstrate the sheer volume of "extra" designs that were generated.

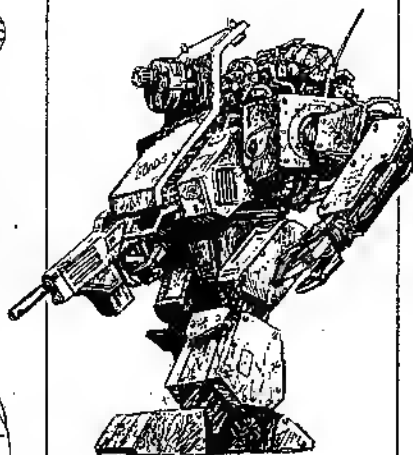
In keeping with the designers' penchant for classification, note that the VOTOMS mecha follows a definite set of categories. The first is MT (Mechanical Trooper), which was the initial attempt by the Gilgamesh Army to build workable battle armor. This led to the highly successful AT line, which is broken down by class: medium, heavy, and light. Variations on these classes are indicated by BTC, which denotes a customized version for Battle Ring combat, X, for Experimental, and FX for Future Experimental (presumably models in development for the next war). Balalant and Quent mecha are simply noted as 'B' and 'Q' respectively.



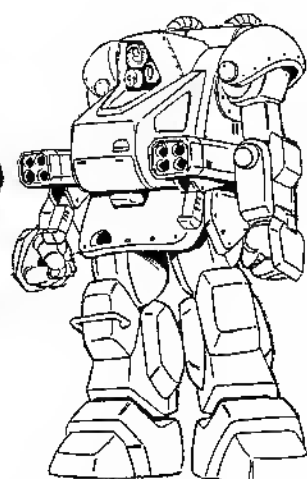
MT-X02
"Machine Trooper"



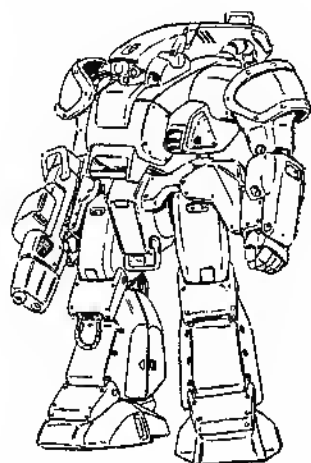
MT-03-ST
"Mechanical Trooper"



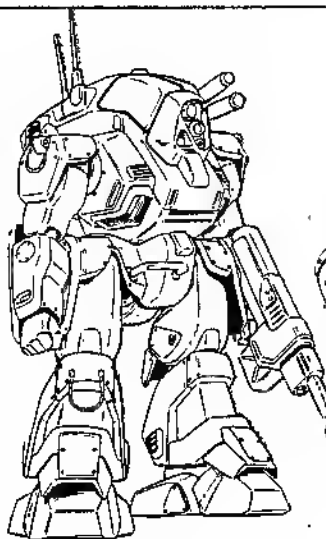
MT-04
"Magical Doll"



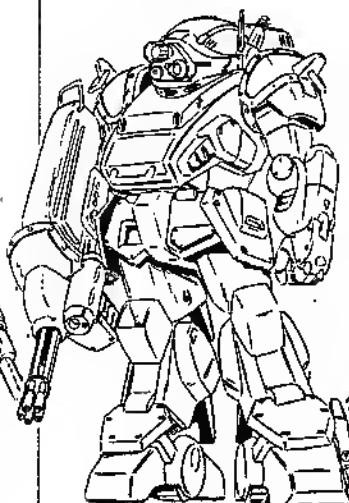
AT-02, AT-03
"Armored Trooper"



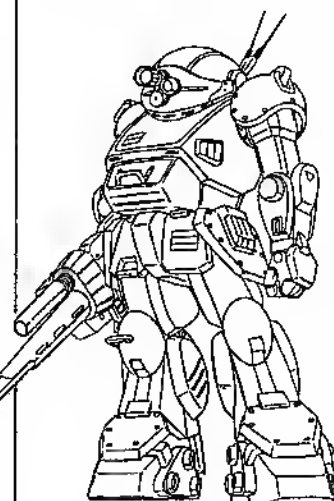
AT-05
"Armored Trooper"



ATM-01
"Clever Camel"

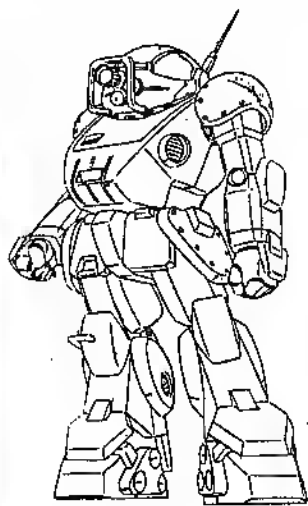


ATM-04
"Cruel Dog"

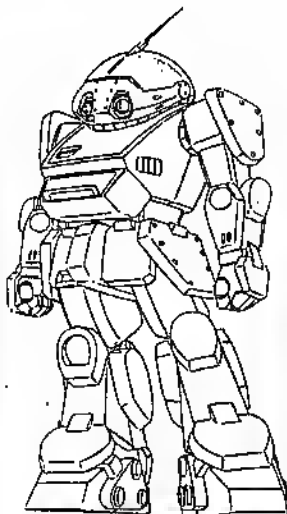


ATM-09-ST
"Scopedog"

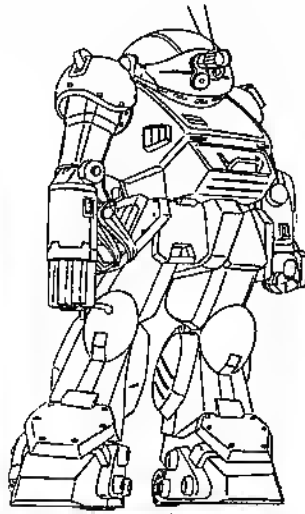
Abbreviations: STC:Standard Custom/SSC:Stereo Scope Custom/GC:Gatling Cannon/WP:Waterproof



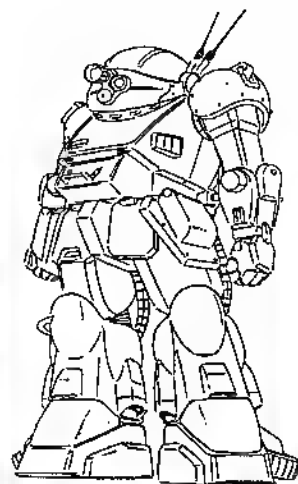
ATM-09-STC
Strong Bacchus



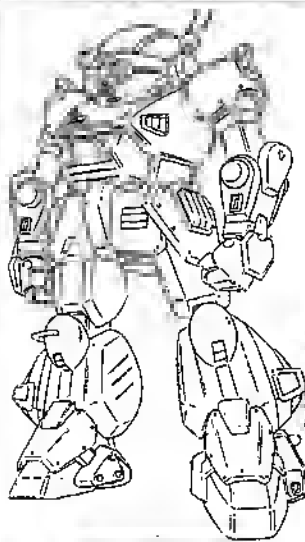
ATM-09-SSC
Purple Bear



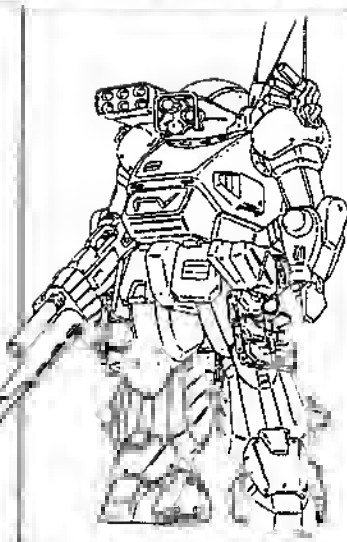
ATM-09-GC
Brutishdog



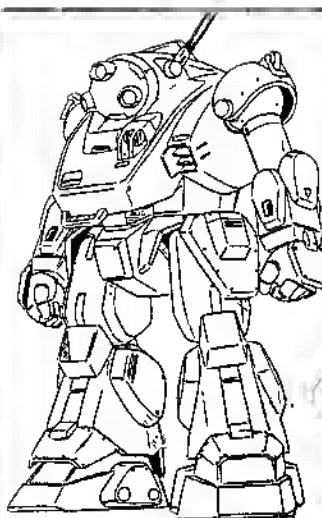
ATM-09-WR
Marshydog



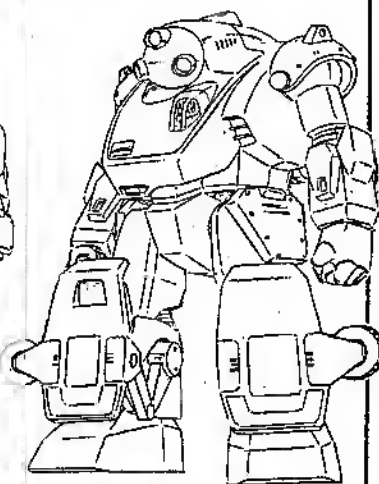
ATM-09-STTC
Turbo Custom



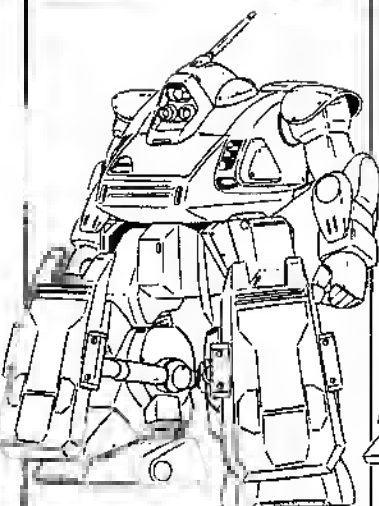
ATM-09-STTC
Red Shoulder Custom



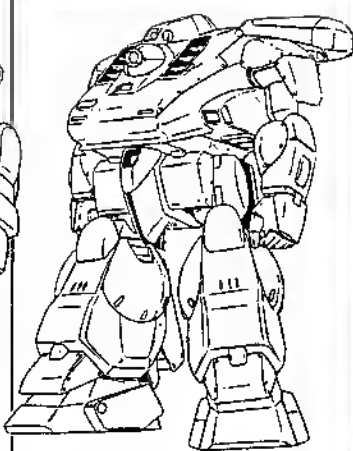
ATH-06-ST
Standing Beetle



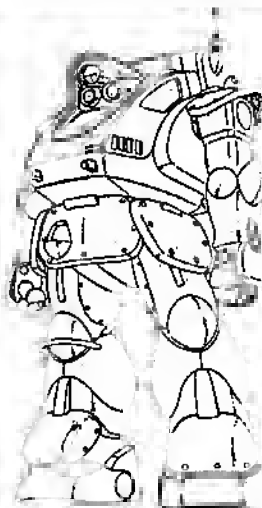
ATH-06-WP
Diving Beetle



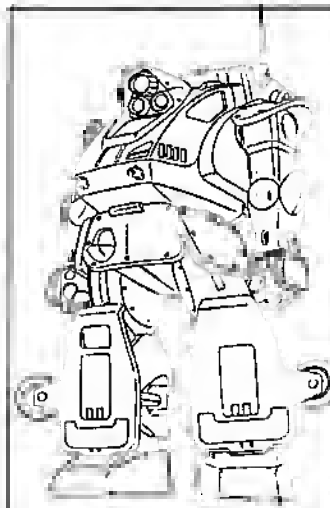
ATH-08-WR
Domestic Goose



ATH-10-WP
Dangerous Brim

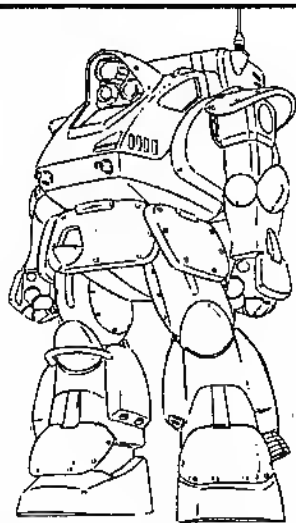


ATH-14-ST
Standing Tortoise

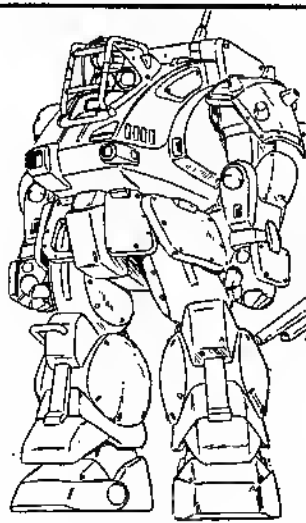


ATH-14-WP
Standing Turtle

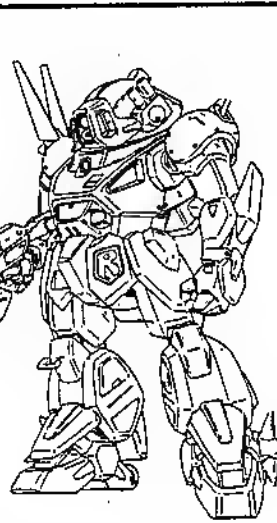
P-RSC:Peruzen-Red Shoulder Custom/DT:Desert Type/X:Experimental/FX:Future Experimental



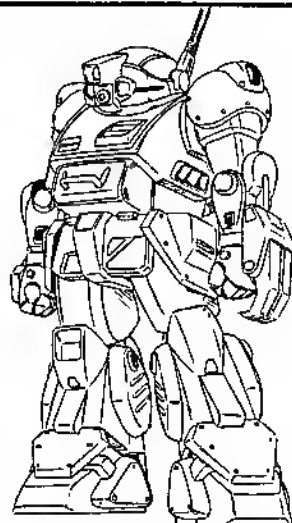
ATH-14-SA/Space Assault
Standing Turtle Mk. II



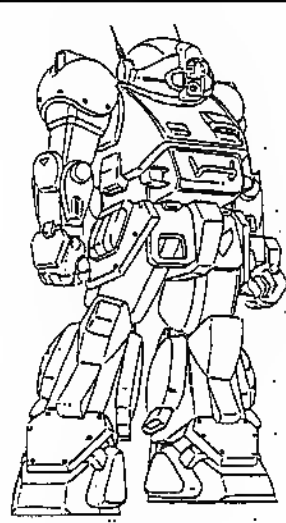
ATH-14-BTC
Battle Ring Custom



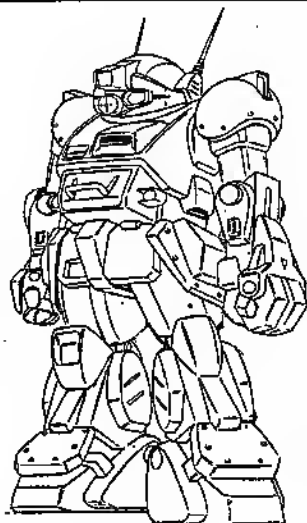
XATH-P-RSC
Bloodsucker



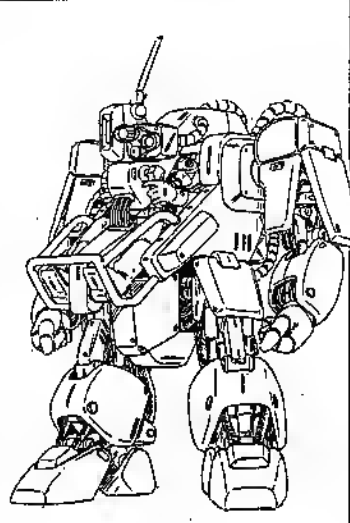
XATH-01/Experimental
Armored Trooper-Heavy



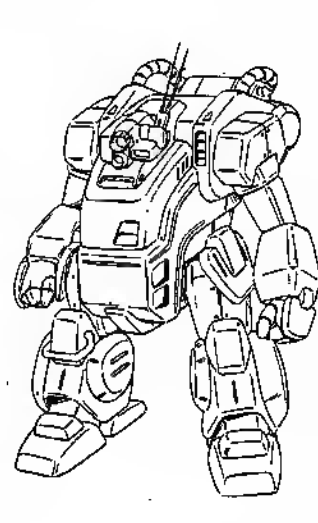
XATH-02
Strike Dog



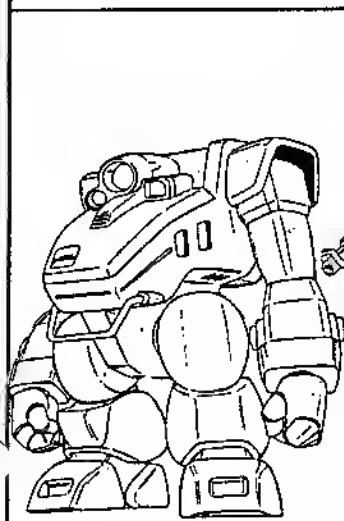
XATH-02-DT
Rabldly Dog



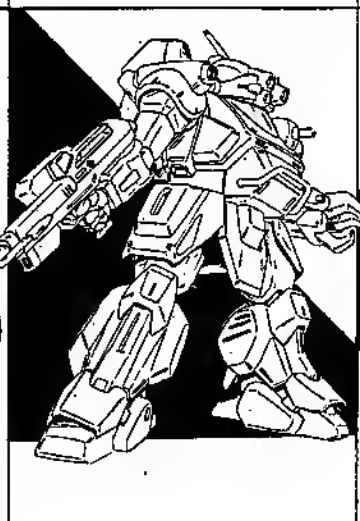
ATL-01
Armored Trooper "Light"



ATL-05
Armored Trooper "Light"



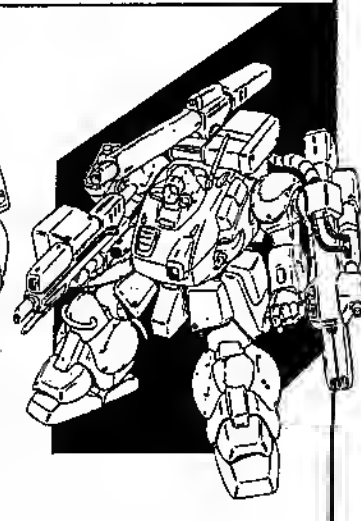
XATL-01-DT
Zwerg



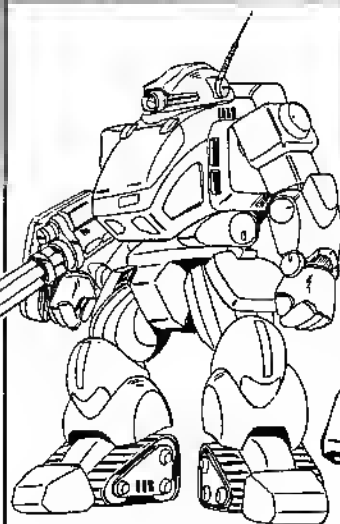
ATM-FX 1/Medium Class
"Future Experimental"



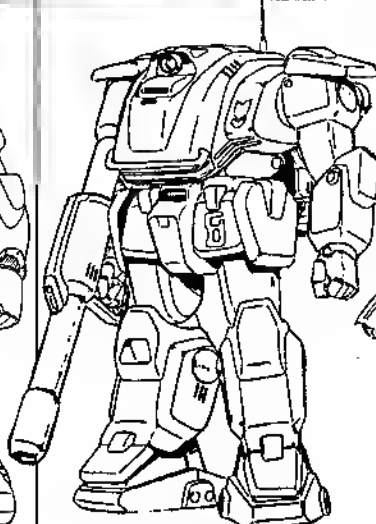
ATL-FX-01/Light Class
"Future Experimental"



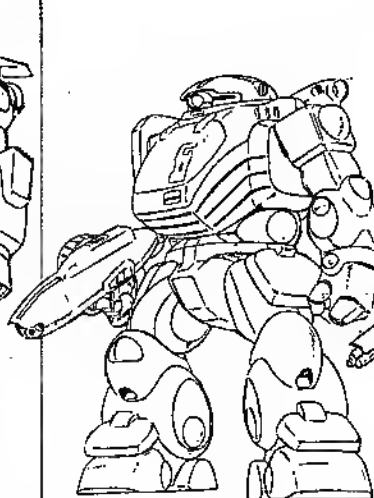
ATH-FX-01/Heavy Class
"Future Experimental"



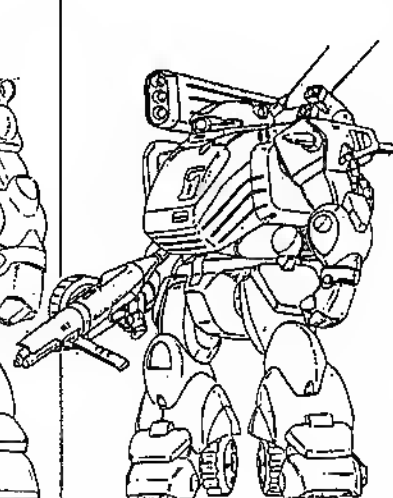
BAT-01
Baialant A.T.



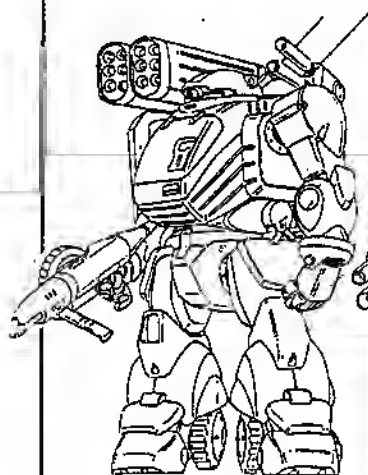
BATM-02
Blocker



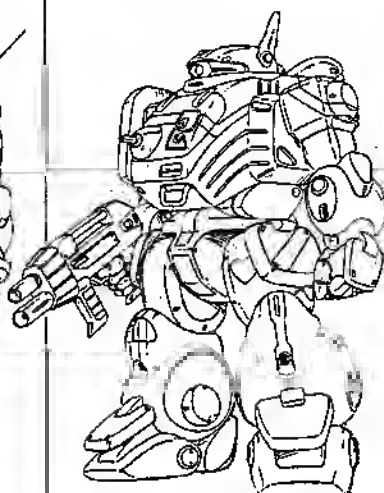
BATM-03
Fatty



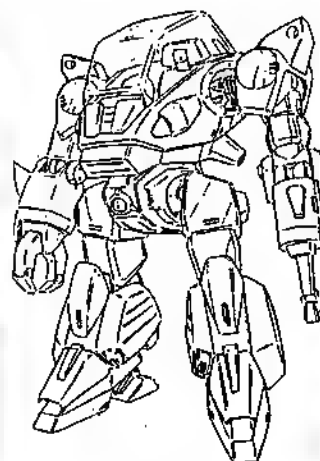
BATM-03 Fatty
Land variation A



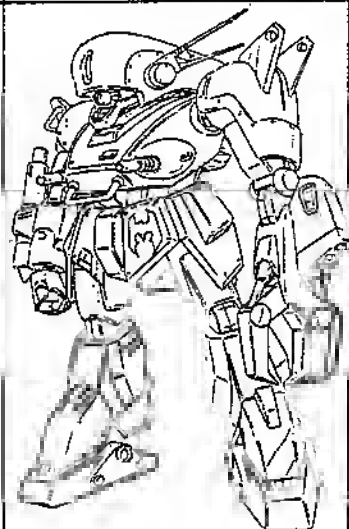
BATM-03 Fatty
Land variation B



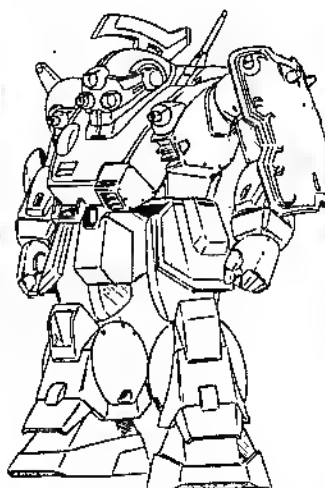
BATM-03 BTC
Battle Ring Custom



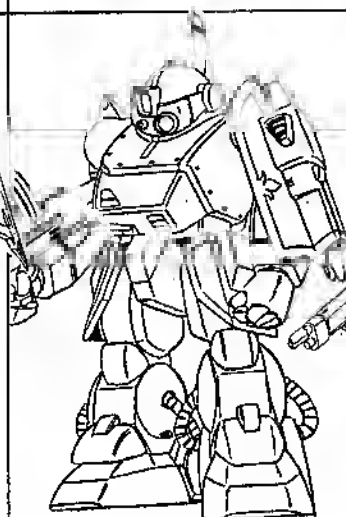
BATM-001 PT
Patrol Type/Busy Crab



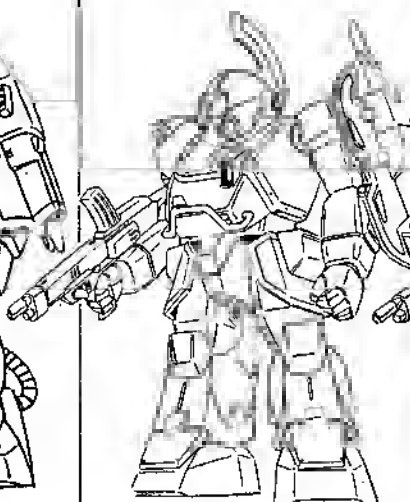
BATH XXX
Ecrubis



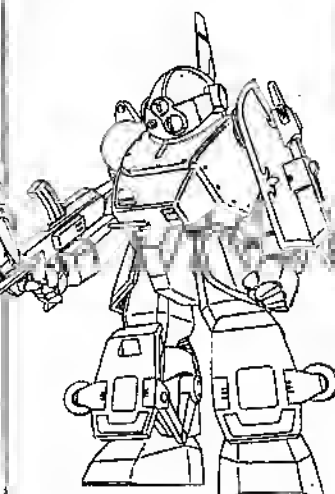
ATH-Q-01
Berserga Type 1



ATH-Q-58
Berserga Type 58

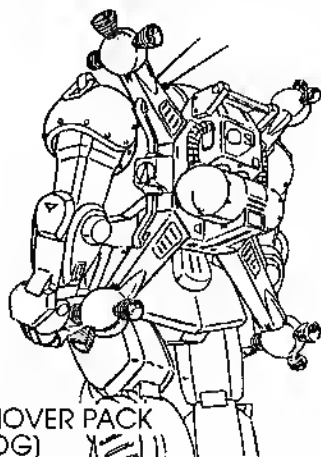


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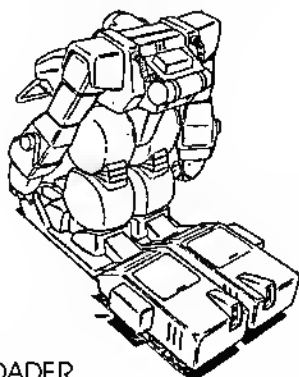


ATH-Q-64
Berserga Type 64

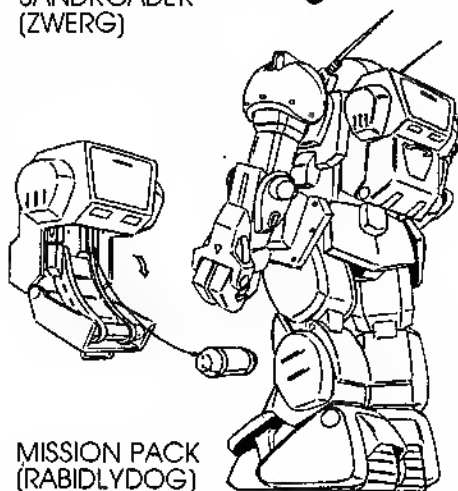
ARMORED TROOPER ACCESSORIES CATALOGUE



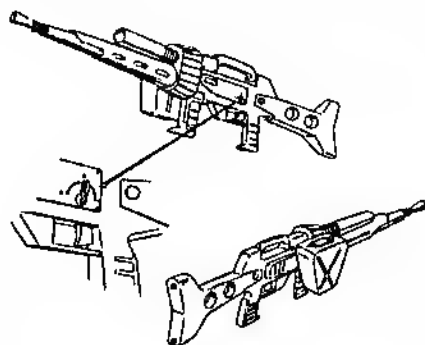
ROUND MOVER PACK
(SCOPEDOG)



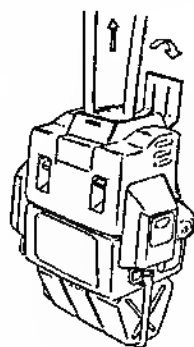
SANDROADER
(ZWERG)



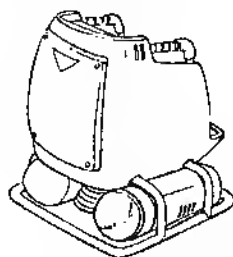
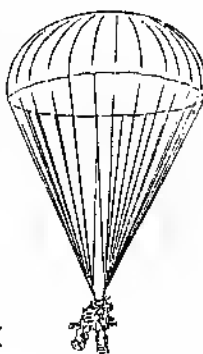
MISSION PACK
(RABIDLYDOG)



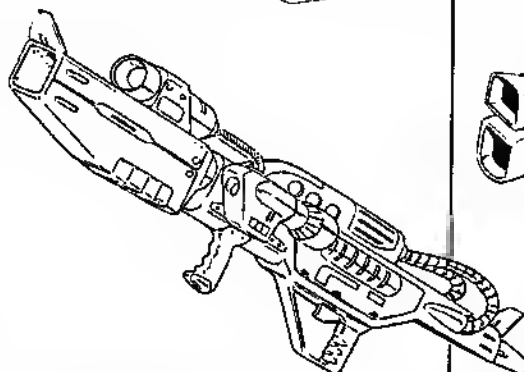
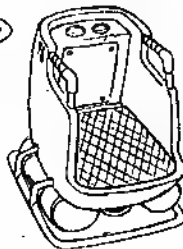
GAT-22 HEAVY MACHINE GUN
(GENERAL USE)



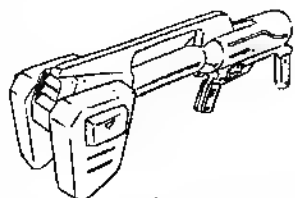
PARACHUTE SACK
(SCOPEDOG)



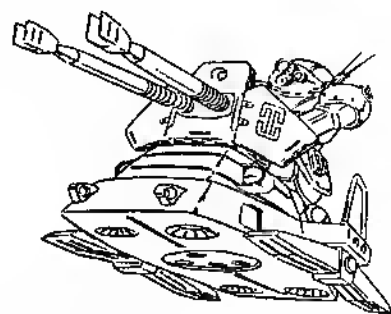
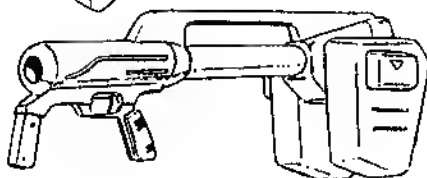
HOVERPOD
(GENERAL USE)



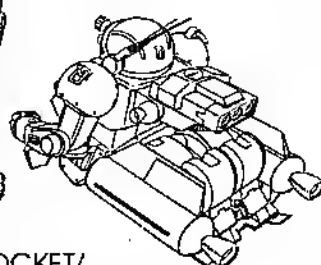
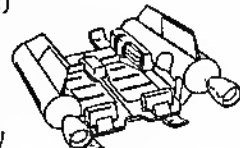
GAT-35 LONG GUN
(GENERAL USE)



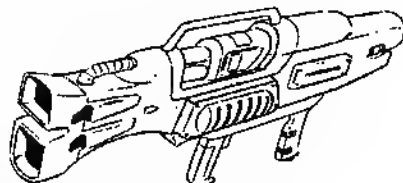
X-SAT-01 SOLID SHOOTER
(STRIKEDOG)



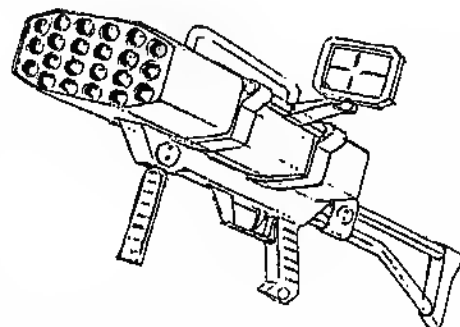
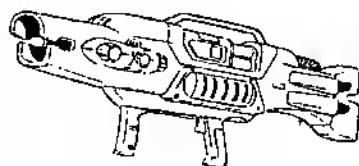
GUNPLATFORM
(GENERAL USE)



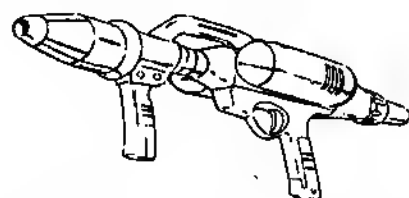
ATC-BR3-S
BOOSTER ROCKET/
DOG CARRIER (SCOPEDOG)



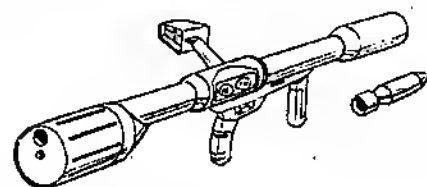
G-BATM-02 HARDBLADE GUN
(BALALANT)



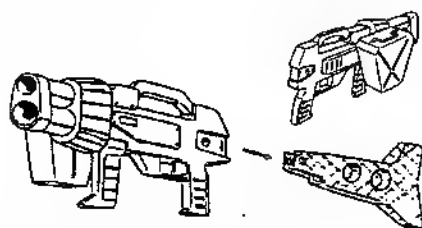
HRAT-30 HANDROCKET GUN
(TORTOISE)



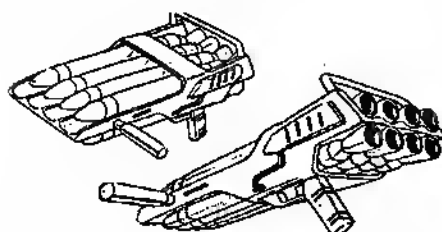
FTAT-16 FLAME THROWER
(TORTOISE)



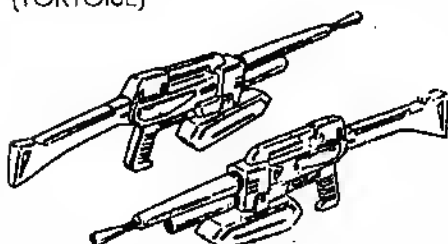
SAT-03 SOLID SHOOTER BAZOOKA
(SCOPEDOG)



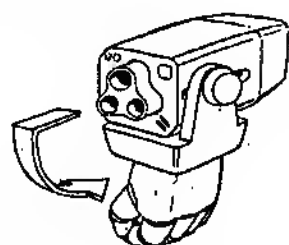
GAT-22-C HEAVY MACHINE GUN
(GENERAL-CUSTOM)



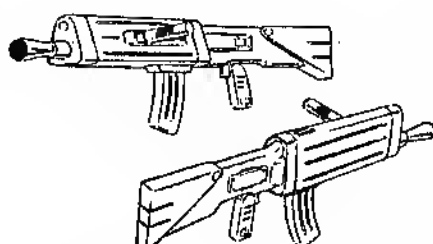
HMAT-38 HAND MISSILE LAUNCHER
(TORTOISE)



GAT-45RSC BLOODY RIFLE
(BLOODSUCKER)



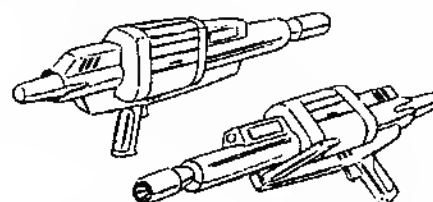
ARMCANNON (ZWERG)



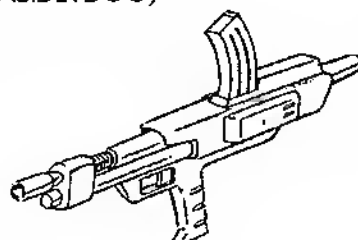
GAT-19 MID MACHINE GUN
(DIVING BEETLE)



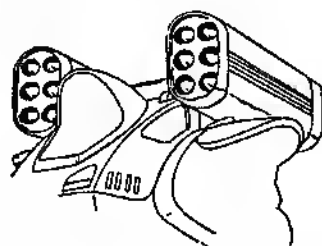
HRAT-23 HAND ROCKET LAUNCHER
(TORTOISE)



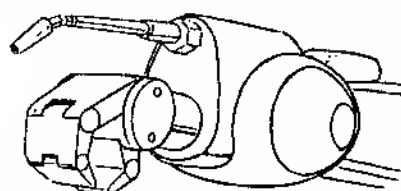
X-SAT 06 HAND SOLID SHOOTER
(RABIDLYDOG)



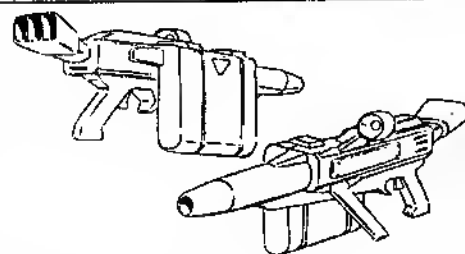
GAT-40C ASSAULT RIFLE
(BERSERGER)



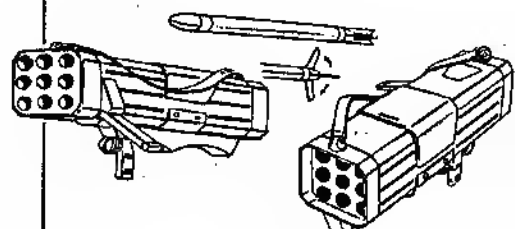
SMAT-32 SHOULDER MISSILE PODS
(TORTOISE)



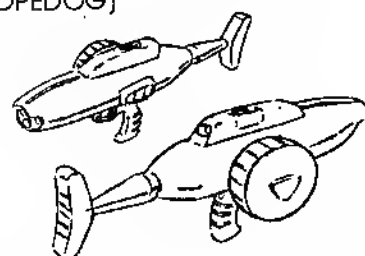
BURNER OPTION ARM
(FATTY)



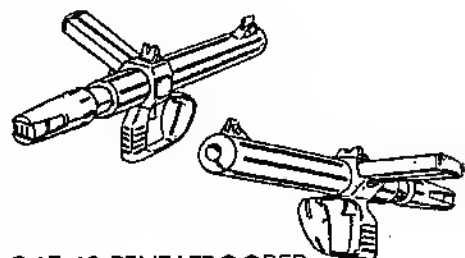
X-SAT-05 HAND SOLID SHOOTER
(BALALANT)



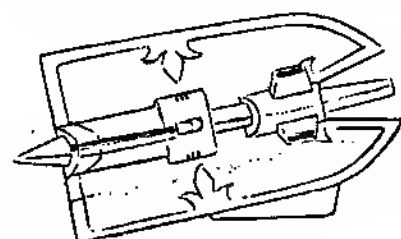
SMAT-3B SHOULDER ROCKET POD
(SCOPEDOG)



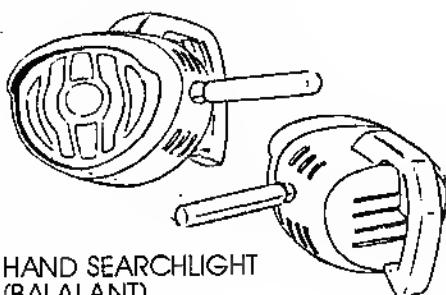
G-BATM 04 CATAPULT LAUNCHER
(BALALANT)



GAT-49 PENTATROOPER
(SCOPEDOG)



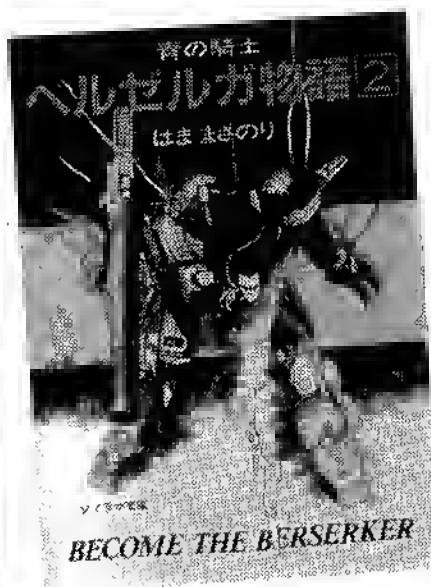
PILEBANKER (BERSERGER)



HAND SEARCHLIGHT
(BALALANT)

BLUE KNIGHT

Wiseman determined that in a galaxy of war, human evolution would advance just as technology did...and one day, humans of supreme ability would appear. Chirico was one. And in these novels written by Masanori Hama (who also wrote the OAV *BIG BATTLE*), we meet another: Kain McDougall. Three years before the Hundred Year War ended, Kain joined a controversial Gilgamesh unit called the "Corpse Army," so named because of the sea of bodies often left in their wake—not all of them soldiers. After the war ends, members of this unit are branded criminals and hunted down by police. It is Astragius Year 7213...



I: BLUE KNIGHT 1

Captured by Balalant soldiers, Kain breaks out of prison and steals a smuggling ship on which he finds a female captive, Roni Shatrait. She stays with him, who returns to Gilgamesh territory and meets Sha Bakku, a Quentman formerly of the Corpse Army and Battle Ring pilot of a Berserger-type A.T.

Staying with him and becoming friends, Kain watches Sha Bakku die at the hands of another former unit member, Clith Katz piloting the powerful A.T. 'Shadow Flare.'

Claiming Sha's Berserger and vowing revenge for him, Kain makes a name for himself in Battle Ring until he finds Shadow Flare again and challenges Katz to a battle which Kain begins to lose...

II: BLUE KNIGHT 2

Defeated by a strange power he does not understand, Kain recovers with the help of a Gilgamesh spy named Mima Sencutter, who rebuilds the Berserger and reveals the truth: five years earlier, the Corpse Army was a radical group who wished

to possess the power of the Quent Mutants (referred to as Old-Types) and launched an ill-fated attack on Wiseman.

Trying to attain his own mutant ability, Katz rebuilt himself into a cyborg and linked with Shadow Flare, gaining psionic powers. Furthermore, Sha Bakku befriended Kain for similar purposes: for Kain has manifested Old-Type abilities, and Sha wished to possess them.

Angered by this revelation, Kain is saved from madness by his growing love for Roni, and with her support, fights Shadow Flare again, this time emerging the victor.

III: K' (K-Dash)

Two years later, Kain has disappeared, and the Merukian Army has begun a new super-soldier experiment: A.T.'s called W-1 (Warrior-1). An anti-government force opposes them, and a mysterious new soldier named Kroma Zender, piloting a 'Calamity Dog' A.T., appears to help.

In a particular battle, Kroma feels a resonance, or affinity for a W-1, and



KAINE



RONI



SHA BAKKU



MIMA
SENCUTTER



KATZ





LORINSER



K' (K-Dash)



KAINE



leaves to contemplate it. He finds Roni working as a Battle Ring Matchmaker and reveals himself to be Kain, but the two are captured and imprisoned by Merukians.

There, Kain learns the truth: to duplicate his Old-Type abilities, the army ordered Mima to get a blood sample with which they would create bio-organic clones of Kain and implant them into W-1 A.T.'s to give each one independent thought. This is called the Merukian Knight Project.

Roni is killed, and Kain destroys the base in a rage after learning the name of the project leader: Lorinser.

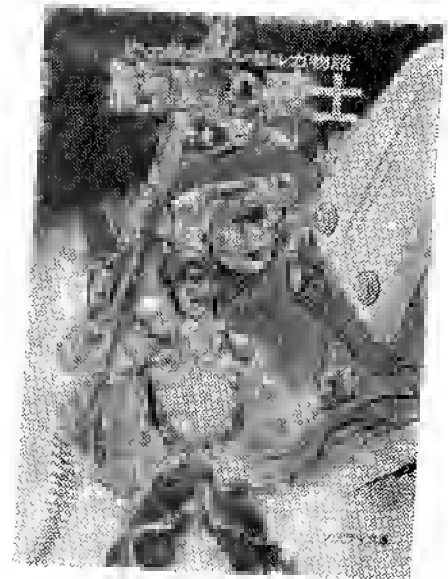
IV: SCREAMING KNIGHT

On a bloody rampage, Kain destroys all the W-1 bases he can find, but Lorinser has taken Merukian Knight Project to its next phase and creates K-Dash, a humanoid supermutant who pilots an ancient, mythical A.T. called 'Rectioneter.'

Long ago, Rectioneter spoke to Lorinser (like Wiseman to Chirico) and directed him to develop a superhuman who would destroy the entire galaxy. Lorinser used his position in the Gilgamesh Army to pursue this, and has brought it to its peak.



Illustrations: Hiroyuki Hataike



Having risen at last, K-Dash and Rectioneter fight Kain, who now pilots a super-advanced Berserger called 'Testa Rossa,' given to him by Mima in return for his betrayal in BERSERGER 2. The stake in their battle is the future of the Astragius Galaxy itself, and the only the best warrior will survive.



Although BLUE KNIGHT has not yet become anime, it has inspired a wealth of potential for model builders and been the subject of two HOBBY JAPAN special volumes. Small wonder, since BLUE KNIGHT actually originated from a series of short stories in DUAL MAGAZINE, published by Takara, one of VOTOMS' primary TV sponsors.

A number of limited-edition models (called 'garage kits') from the series have been released, and in the event the series finally goes to video, much more will inevitably appear.

A.T. VARIATION IN BLUE KNIGHT

BTS:Battle Ring Special

CBS:Custom Battle Ring Special

 <p>ATH-Q63-BTS "Blue Knight" Berserga</p>	 <p>ATH-Q63/BTS II SX "Blue Knight" Berserga "Super Execution"</p>	 <p>Black A.T., A.K.A. "Shadow Flare" No Classification</p>	 <p>ATM-09-ST CBS "Death Messenger"</p>
 <p>ATM-09-SC Wheel Dog (Police)</p>	 <p>ATH-14-BTS "Rising Tortoise"</p>	 <p>BATM-03-BTS "Funny Devil"</p>	 <p>BATM-X1 "Pot Belly"</p>
 <p>ATL-KH1-FX Warrior 1</p>	 <p>ATM-FX-1 "Calamity Dog" Zerberus VR-Maxima</p>	 <p>"Rectioneter" No classification</p>	 <p>ATM FX "Infinity"/SSS-X Testa Rossa</p>

In 1989, another tale was added to the growing VOTOMS universe. After the enormous popularity of their numerous GUNDAM spinoffs, Sunrise commissioned an all-new animated VOTOMS story for a serialized, 12-episode OAV format. Some of the creative staff of the TV series was reunited, and with the advent of higher standards of animation and storytelling, crafted a saga equal in appeal to the original program despite its relative brevity.

The MELLORINK storyline takes place 4 months prior to episode 1 of VOTOMS (year 7213, month 9), during the final days of the Hundred Year War, and is set entirely on Planet Merukia

ARITY MELLORINK (17)

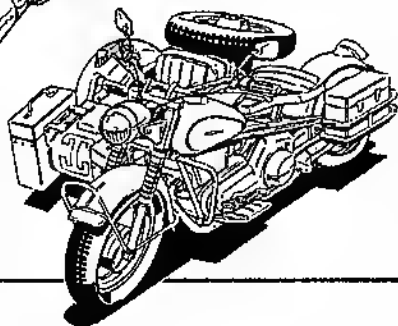
An ex-soldier in the Merukian Army, 'Mello' was part of *Planbandol* Battalion until the officers left his platoon behind with only Anti-A.T. rifles to defend themselves against a Balalant attack. Now the lone survivor of these *Armored Hunters*, Mello has vowed vengeance for his men...



ANTI-A.T. RIFLE

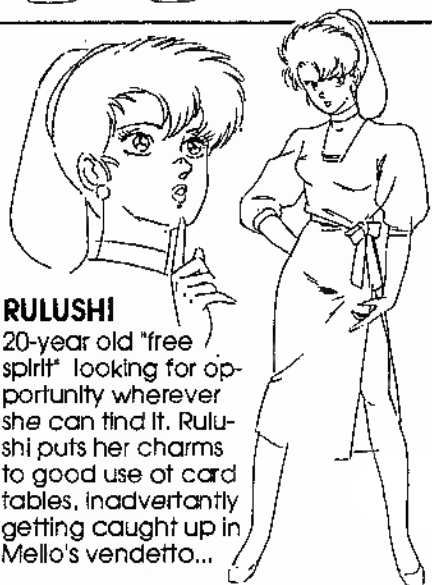
Links to goggle similar to that of an A.T., can counter an enemy A.T. in battle.

'Pilebanker' attachment: similar to those used by Berserga A.T.'s.



KIEK KARADYNE

An agent for the Merukian Army, Kiek is collecting information about the officers of *Planbandol* Battalion, crossing paths with Mello on many occasions...



RULUSHI

20-year old "free spirit" looking for opportunity wherever she can find it. Rulushi puts her charms to good use of card tables, inadvertently getting caught up in Mello's vendetta...

1. WILDERNESS

Outside a Gilgamesh army base on Merukia, a lone soldier hijacks a supply truck on its way to the installation. Holding the driver at gunpoint, the soldier gives him a "gift" for the base commander, Cpt. DOCMAN.

Heedless of this, the wily Docman enjoys a poker game in the company of two guests: LT. KIEK KARADYNE and RULUSHI. Kiek, in his capacity as a Merukian officer, speaks of his ongoing investigation into the *Planbandol* Scandal, a war crime involving the theft of a jijirium supply, but Docman denies any knowledge of this. Finally getting a good hand after a miserable losing streak (and forcing Rulushi to up her ante at gunpoint),

Docman is interrupted by the delivery of the soldier's gift—a single dogtag that, while appearing innocuous to the others, holds great significance for Docman.

Leaving the cardgame with a warning to Kiek and Rulushi not to look at his hand, Docman rushes to base command and orders his men to full alert, claiming a Balalant attack is imminent.

"But our scanners show no sign of Balalant in the area," protests a Lieutenant.

"Don't argue," Docman shouts, "if I say it's Balalant, it's Balalant!" Outside, the lone soldier commandeers one of the halftracks sent to find the imaginary Balalant attack and brazenly drives it back

into the base. Setting off explosives in the hangar gives him time to move to the control room as Docman rushes to the source of the commotion. Dumbfounded, he watches as the soldier's face appears on the base's PA monitors.

"Captain Docman! You remember me...I was in the platoon under Lt. Schwepps! My fight is with you alone. A.T. vs. anti-A.T. rifle! Meet me outside!"

Docman orders his men to the control room, and the running battle forces the invader into the room with Kiek and Rulushi. They conceal him from immediate threat and suggest a nearby air duct as a likely escape route. Be-

mused by the determination of this one young man, Rulushi asks his name.

"Mellorink," he answers.

Returning to the base's hangar, Mello hijacks another truck and roars away.

Predictably, Docman's screeching orders to pursue are unheeded. Kiek Karadyne suggests that an officer of Docman's standing shouldn't be afraid to fight his own battles, and Docman angrily boards a Scopedog, growling that all of his cowardly men can look forward to a court martial.

In the wilderness outside the base, a battle erupts. Although Docman's A.T. is outfitted with heavy weapons, Mellorink carries a deadly counterforce: an anti-A.T. rifle, specially designed to carry out the mission of an Armored Hunter. Outclassed by this unlikely foe, Docman fights in vain.

"Too bad," Karadyne laments after the battle, "Docman had a winning hand after all."

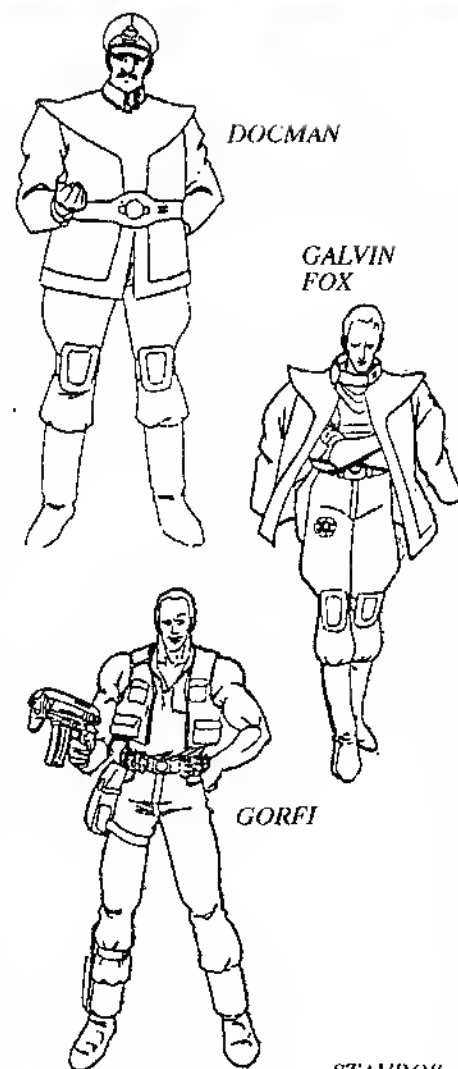
2. COLISEUM

Arity Mellorink arrives at *Da Bing*, a coastal town on the jungle continent Kummén. During this time, Bera guerrilla uprisings attract all types of mercenaries here, so Mello is not entirely out of place. In moments, he comes upon a street fight and is drawn into it by BORF, a sleazy street beggar. Complying with the circumstances, Mello makes short work of Borf's assailants and moves on to a local bar for information.

Borf tags along (though a past "incident" prevents him from entering the bar), and Mello is surprised to find Rulushi inside. The reunion is punctuated when Mello recognizes a face from his past on a gaudy poster. With a note of distaste in her voice, Rulushi explains that the man in the poster is the local Battle Ring champion. Mello knows him as LT. GALVIN FOX.

Bolting from the bar, Mello rushes to the Battle Ring to watch as the "Silver Fox" takes out the latest contender for the title. Fox concludes the match with his favorite move: crushing his opponent in the hands of his customized A.T.

Borf mentions Fox's popularity in the betting polls, and Mello asks how to arrange to get in a match.



"Well, first we'll have to get you an A.T.," Borf begins.

"I won't need one."

Dollar signs in his eyes, Borf sets up the match, and Mello asks Rulushi for a favor...

In the Battle Ring ready room, Fox is about to smack a technician for not keeping his A.T. clean when Rulushi arrives, asking for the famous battle ring champion. Posing as an admirer, she gives the would-be gladiator a bouquet...but as she leaves, a dogtag falls out of the flowers. The signal has been given.

The Battle Ring begins, all bets against Mellorink to beat the champion. Mello endures the jeers of the crowd and characteristically holds his own as long as he can, but Fox presses every advantage, eventually sweeping Mello up in his A.T.'s death grip...but in the final moments, Fox cannot crush his victim: Mello is wearing a body harness. Although separated from part of his anti-A.T. rifle, Mello is able to finish off Fox with the pile-banker unit.

Kiek Karadyne watches with interest as the Armored Hunter ends the reign of the Silver Fox.

3. JUNGLE

Blood and gunfire rip the Kummén jungle. Bera guerrillas fight bravely against the advance of technology into their land, but the men they fight against have vast resources at their disposal.

One such man is BARON STAVROS, whose mansion in Kummén was bought with money gained from driving farmers off their land and selling it to newcomers. This practice has attracted the attention of the Merukian military, who have sent Kiek Karadyne to question Stavros about the legitimacy of his holdings.

Karadyne's questioning drifts toward the *Planbandol* scandal, hinting that those who were involved have lately met with "accidents," when Stavros' cotillion is interrupted by a Bera attack. Stavros' bodyguards tear after the guerrillas in A.T.'s, but lose the majority of the attackers into the thick brush.

Stavros himself boards an A.T. and joins his henchman Gomez in the hunt. One by one, the gue-

rillas are corraled and slaughtered. But just as the last of them dealt with, a shot from an anti-A.T. rifle renews the fight. Stavros spots a cloaked figure bolting for cover and sends the others in pursuit.

"An anti-A.T. rifle," Stavros muses, "so it's you, Mellorink!"

The new attacker leads the A.T.'s through a web of boobytraps, but abruptly stumbles into a bed of quicksand. On the opposite shore stands the real Mellorink; the attacker is a Bera woman armed just as he is. They stare for a long, awkward moment, until the woman, stressed to her limit, opens fire on her confused doppelganger. Mello can only dive for cover and watch as Stavros approaches and brutally finishes the chase. The wicked baron chuckles; Kiek's warning was empty after all.

Later, Stavros and Gomez toast their successful hunt on a hilltop when Kiek Karadyne pulls up in a jeep. Kiek remains convinced that Stavros' days are numbered, and an arrogant Stavros admits to having been involved in the *Planbando* Battalion as MAJOR SUNOOK. Kiek has found no evidence of Stavros' connection to the scandal, but maintains even as he drives away that Sunook's past will come back to haunt him one way or the other.

Prophetic words, for at that moment, an object arcs through the air and plummets into Stavros' wine glass. It is a dogtag.

Spotting Mellorink for real, they fire up their A.T.'s and move out—straight into a new barrage of traps and the end of their hunting days.

4. LEANING TOWER

Having left Kummen behind, Mello crosses a desert on his motorcycle. Without warning, a truck appears in the road behind him...and almost before Mello can react, the driver opens fire on him!

Careening down a hillside, he is thrown from his motorcycle and returns the fire, but is forced to the nearest available cover, the dead hulk of a crashed Gilgamesh cruiser, impaled in the ground looking for all the world like a leaning tower.

Mello slips inside and confronts one booby trap after another. The

perilous incline of the ship presents a considerable obstacle as well, and Mello can do little more but stumble from one pitfall to another, managing only a fleeting glimpse of his attacker.

At one point, Mello is trapped in an antechamber and the oxygen is sucked out. Scrambling for a dead soldier's air tank, he feints death himself when his attacker appears...but is then lured away by a noise elsewhere.

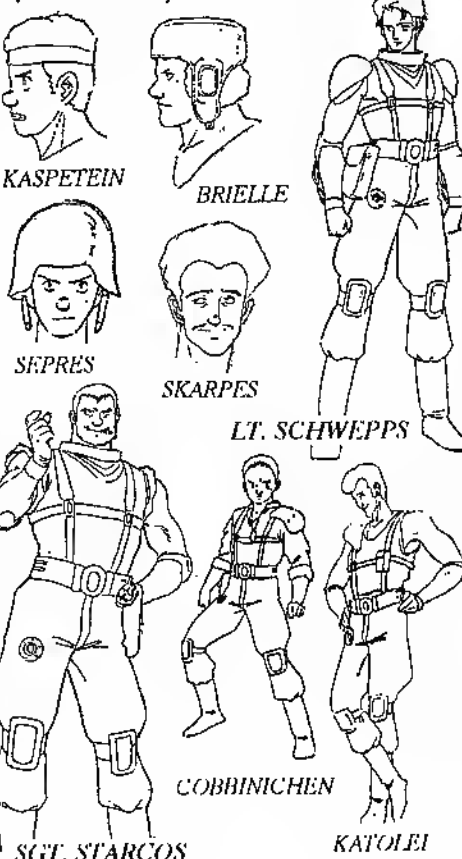
A moment later, Mello is grabbed from behind.

"Wait, it's me—not an enemy!" It is none other than Kiek Karadyne. Admitting that he was driving through the area earlier, Kiek also came under fire and was likewise forced into the ship. Unlike Mellorink, however, he identified the attacker as GORFI, who once served as a Sergeant in Mello's Battalion.

Gorfi, too, knows of Mellorink, and quickly finds the tables turned when both Mello and Kiek set their own ambush.

Afterward, Mello and Kiek prepare to part ways. Mello throws Kiek a hard glance.

"He wasn't aiming at you," Mello accuses, "he was only aiming at me." Without another word, he speeds away.



5. BATTLEFIELD

Rumbling across the desert finally takes its toll on Mello's trusty motorcycle. Forced to take a respite from his self-imposed mission, Mellorink builds a campfire in the shadow of a downed Merukian bomber. In the process, he pricks himself on a weed (called Chekor) which, according to Karadyne's narrative, contains a poison that causes vivid nightmares.

A rainstorm leads Mello to find cover in the bomber's cockpit...and we are torn from the present into an image of the past. Mello's dream takes him back to where his mission began: on the war-torn planet Mioite, only a few months earlier (Year 7213, month 6). There, Mello and his A.T. platoon, led by Lt. SCHWEPPS and Sgt. STARCOS, served in a Gilgamesh battalion against the Balabant. Fighting for their lives against overwhelming odds, the valiant men meet their ends. Mellorink alone survives to hear the jibes of passing Balabant footsoldiers, "pity them...they were just tools for the ones who retreated."

Screaming with the rage of vengeance, Mello wakes from the dream and recalls all the details of that fateful day...

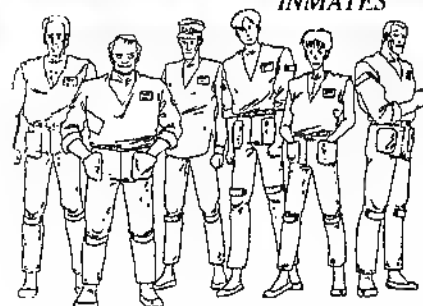
Faced with the prospect of retreat from Mioite, the officers of the Battalion needed a single platoon to stay behind and protect the removal of a huge stock of priceless jirium. Schwepps' platoon was an easy choice.

Lt. Schwepps protested the order over a field phone, claiming that by Gilgamesh law any field officer confronted with a mission with a smaller than 5% survival rate has the right to refuse it. Stalled on the phone, Schwepps left to personally request that the order be withdrawn. While the others argued over their meager chances, they were interrupted by a visit from Major Galvin Fox.

"New orders," Fox announced, "your status has been changed from Armored Troopers to Armored Hunters. Go exchange your weapons." When Starcos protested, Fox simply gestured to the forlorn Lt. Schwepps standing nearby as their A.T.'s were skylifted away.



BANCE



INMATES

"Everyone...I'm sorry."

Predictably, the Balalant forces arrived hot on the heels of the retreating officers and Mello's unit was overwhelmed.

Afterward, Mello stalked through enemy territory, attempting to steal a vehicle and return to his battalion to enter the brave sacrifices of his comrades into military record. Saved from Balalant troops by a Gilgameth patrol, however, he instead wound up handcuffed in a court martial proceeding.

There, prosecutor NUMERIKOV, on behalf of the battalion's officers, leveled charges of desertion and theft against Mellorink.

A telephone call from Brigadier General Helmeshion urged that the trial be brought to a swift close. Mello began to see through the curtain of lies.

"It was planned from the beginning with those impossible orders...a setup to label us as rebels. I understood it all now. May God and my comrades help me...I will live for revenge!"

Bolting for the door and stopping only to scoop up his anti-A.T. rifle and the dogtags of his dead comrades, Mello chose his present path...a path that once again crosses that of Rulushi when she and a busload of friends appears on the desert road.

Coincidentally, she and Mello have the same destination: Dopper Penitentiary.

6. PRISON

Dopper Penitentiary; nightfall. A prisoner thinks he has achieved the impossible by escaping into the waters surrounding the island...but Warden BANCE is quick to prove him wrong.

Sometime later, we find Mellorink on a plane with other prisoners of the Gilgameth army. Inexplicably, he has been captured and sentenced to labor in Dopper's jirium mine. He is processed in without fanfare until his admission papers wind up on Bance's desk. Bance knows of Arity Mellorink, for Bance was one of the *Planbandol* officers. Also a suspicious sort, Bance begins to suspect that Mello did not come here by chance.

In the mines, a group of inmates discusses their own breakout

plans. Unlike the last escapee, the leader of this pack, BEKKER, has worked to gain the favor of the warden. Their escape is assured.

A whistle sounds, and Mello joins a lineup of other new prisoners. Bance approaches. Making a spectacle of their meeting, he slyly turns the tables on his would-be assassin, loudly proclaiming that Mello is his favorite informant, among other unsavory things. "They all heard that," Bance whispers threateningly. "You won't survive the night."

The threat is not an empty one. Mello has the bad fortune to have been billeted with Bekker's Men, and it is the night of their escape attempt...

Bance, meanwhile, broods in his office. Cunning to a fault, he suspects Mellorink's desire for revenge against him, but discounts the notion that a mere boy could have come this far without help. Certain that one of his fellow officers from the battalion is behind it, he wonders which.

Learning that Mello survived the night, Bance inflicts a brutal line of interrogation on him, demanding answers that the young man simply does not have.

The torture finally comes down to a final, lethal injection...from which Mello is spared at the protest of the prison doctor and tossed in a cell.

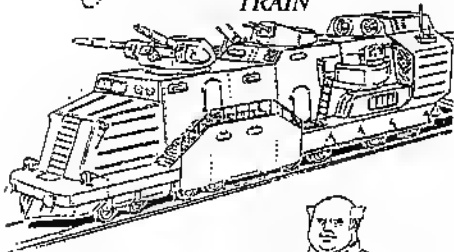
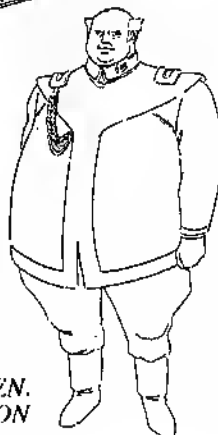
Outside, a long-awaited troupe of entertainers arrives. The performers are headed by none other than Rulushi, who nervously bluffs her way through an inept magic act. She is here both as distraction and collaborator; she has also brought Mello's anti-A.T. rifle. The show is mercifully cut short by a distant explosion--Bekker's men, who have spent the night tunneling to freedom, have now reached the outer shoreline and their homestretch.

This sparks a riot in the prison grounds until Bance boards his personal Scopedog and speeds after them. Frustrated by his unsuccessful torture of Mello, Bance slaughters the men before realizing that Bekker is among them.

Having retrieved his anti-A.T. rifle from Rulushi, Mello squares off against Bance. At the crucial moment, the warden's A.T. works

RULUSHI

MELLO

ARMORED
TRAIN

BRIG. GEN.
HELMESHION


against him. Battling on a water-swept bridge compromises maneuvering ability--and Mellorink is quick to exploit the handicap.

As Rulushi's bus rolls away, Kiek Karadyne flies overhead and moves to follow.

7. RAILWAY

The Barashutra Mountain Transverse Railway slices through the night, easing to a stop at a remote depot where Mellorink waits to slip on board. Unknown to him, Rulushi is elsewhere on the same train.

The next morning, the other passengers are surprised to see a military unit waiting at the train's next stop. A heavy-weapon engine and an armored car are connected to the train for the benefit of a VIP passenger: Merukian Brigadier General Helmeshion. As his cargo, a shipment of jijirium is loaded on board. Helmeshion is warned of the bandit attacks that plague these train lines. Although he is a sure target, he ignores the warning. Nearby, Kiek Karadyne slips onto the train as well.

En route to their destination, Helmeshion leaves the protection of his armored car despite the feeble protests of his personal aide.

Outside, the horizon is dotted with plumes of dust. Jeering motorcycle bandits line up, lead by a red Armored Trooper. In it rides their leader.

"You're too greedy, Helmeshion," he mutters, "you can't keep all the jijirium for yourself! I'll get it and break your ambition!"

On the train, Rulushi enters the dining car and stops when she sees the General. He returns her gaze with recognition. "Flurell!" The two glare at each other for a long moment, and Kiek watches with interest as they argue. Abruptly, their car is showered with bullets--the bandits have arrived!

Helmeshion creeps back to the safety of his personal car and his guards open fire on the attackers, supported by the huge cannons on the train engine. When the leader orders his men in close to board the train, however, a new player enters the fray: Mellorink. Instantly, he spots his target: the red A.T.

"Lieutenant Gannard!"

Grabbing a bike, he moves in to attack Gannard himself. Unprepared for the assault, Gannard can only watch as Mello scrambles up onto his Armored Trooper.

Barrelling straight for the train, however, he manages to ram into the side and knock Mello off; right in front of Kiek and Rulushi. Gannard spots the telltale dogtag and realizes at last who his brash attacker is; for Gannard was once a Lieutenant in Mello's Battalion.

Preparing to execute Mello, he is thrown off guard when the train lurches--Helmeshion has disconnected his own cars to escape the fire zone, unconcerned for the remaining passengers. Mellorink springs into action and the battle is over with split-second precision.

Beaten and bleeding, Gannard can only offer sympathy when Mellorink claims victory.

"Your REAL enemy is in the car that got away."

"What do you mean," Mello gasps.

"The top officer of Planbandol Battalion," Rulushi states, "Brigadier General Helmeshion."

"Helmeshion? How do you know that?"

"He's my enemy, too."

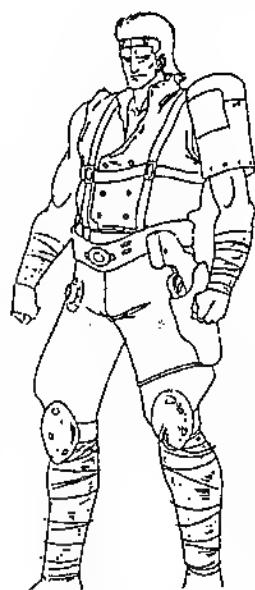
"Well, well," Kiek muses, "this is getting interesting."

8. GHOST TOWN

Helmeshion's segment of the train speeds on, and radio contact is made with a new player in the drama. Not far from the railway waits MAJOR BOYLE and his elite platoon of troubleshooters, the A.T. RANGERS. Helmeshion alerts them that Mellorink is in the area and must be eliminated...but Rulushi is to be taken alive. Boyle tries to offer safer solutions to the problem, but his protest falls on deaf ears.

Back on the railway, an army task force has brought in a new engine and the survivors roll on. Mellorink asks about Rulushi's relationship to Helmeshion, and she admits that he is her uncle.

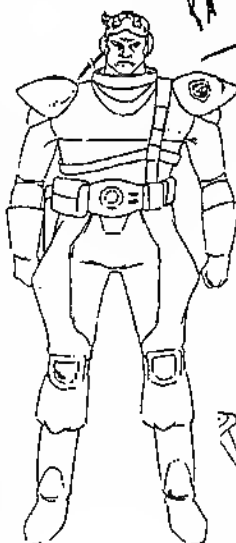
Abruptly, the train stops and soldiers come aboard for an inspection. Assuming the soldiers were sent by Helmeshion to apprehend them, Mello and Rulushi sneak off, grab a motorcycle, and hightail it into the outback. A running battle



GANNARD
AND
BANDIT'S



MAJ. BOYLE
(A.T. RANGERS)



begins with two armored cars, and an abandoned factory complex looms into view over the surrounding hills.

Also appearing far ahead is a platoon of helicopters carrying A.T.'s: the A.T. Rangers are moving to intercept.

Taking temporary cover in the dead factory, Mello sets the customary booby traps and a cat and mouse game ensues. But their opposition outnumbers them, and before they can act to prevent it, Mello and Rulushi are plunged off a bridge into the deep shaft below.

Despite the fall, they survive to discover huge vats of POLYMER RINGEL SOLUTION, a highly flammable liquid used in Armored Troopers (which, incidentally, is what causes them to explode when destroyed). Mello finds irony in the fact that the "lifeblood" of an A.T. is what can save them from their predicament and begins to flood the chamber with the pungent solution. Rulushi comments to herself that even if a lucky card is not dealt to her this time, she has Mello to depend on.

On the levels above, Boyle stops his patrol when he catches the odor of Polymer Ringel. Deducing what Mello has in mind, he orders his men to hold fire as they descend.

Resting for a moment, Rulushi reveals her sad life story.

Although her full name is FLUREL C. HELMESHION, she once belonged to a noble family named the Cabiers. Her father died of an unexplained accident, causing her mother to commit suicide, and leaving only the uncle to inherit the family estate. Rulushi, being too young at the time, took off to make her own living however she could.

The pounding of metal footsteps surrounds them, and Boyle's men appear, guns drawn. Boyle himself approaches and steps out of his A.T. in a last attempt to prevent further conflict. Recognizing him from younger days when he was a friend of her family, Rulushi begs him to let them go. Boyle responds by offering to let Mello go in exchange for her surrender. Mello wants none of it, flinging a dogtag at Boyle in challenge. Resigned to

doing it the hard way, Boyle squares off against the younger soldier in hand-to-hand combat.

It is a struggle Mello begins to lose against the bigger man, but their fight is cut short when Rulushi is snatched away by another of the A.T. Rangers and lifted out of the danger zone by helicopter.

His task finished, Boyle suggests that Mello take the opportunity to escape alive, and is himself airlifted out...but not before Mello manages to grab onto his A.T. Swiftly, he positions himself for the killing blow, but Boyle cautions him to hold back.

"If you want to shoot, go ahead—but your revenge will end here!"

Another ranger, reacting to the situation, opens fire to knock Mello off—and the single volley is all it takes to ignite the Polymer Ringel into a firestorm.

Afterward, Mello emerges from the flames only to watch helplessly as Rulushi is flown away...but his battle is not over yet.

9. FOREST

In the castle estate of the Cabiers, Helmeshion converses over a phone with his superior, GENERAL BATTENTAIN about the top secret P.S. Project. Assuring him the jijirium is safe and the Cabier fortune is also at his disposal, Helmeshion hopes to bargain for a promotion.

Outside, Boyle arrives with Rulushi and is met by the repulsive COLONEL NUMERIKOV.

"It is you," Boyle sneers, "no wonder my tooth hurt this morning."

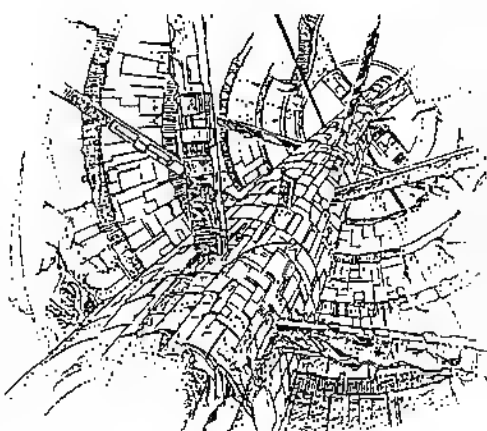
Boyle reports the completion of his mission to the general and has to admit he did not confirm Mello-rink's death, but proclaims a 99% chance against his survival. Numerikov comments that the boy has gained a reputation for surviving on a one percent chance.

Turning to leave, Boyle is again confronted by Numerikov, who insists he must stay to protect them in case Mello returns.

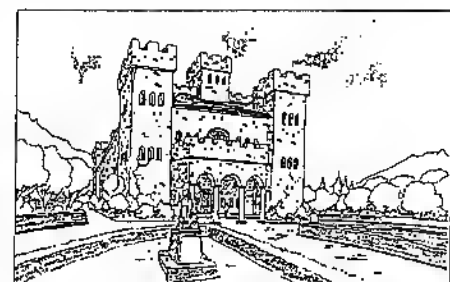
"Why can't you do it," Boyle taunts.

"My only interest is in helping Helmeshion to attain his dream."

"Helping to turn a soldier into a machine? I want nothing to do with it."



FACTORY



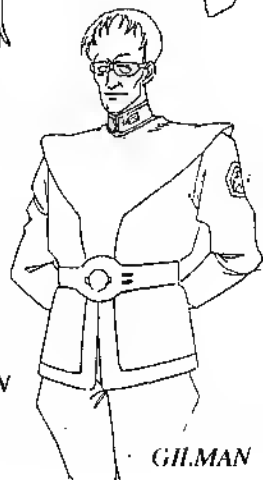
CABIER ESTATE



NUMERIKOV



FLUREL
(RULUSHI)



HELMESHION

Rulushi confronts her uncle, who tries to convince her she is too young and free-spirited to handle the burden of her inheritance and needs her to sign the final papers over to him. She still protests, and Numerikov intervenes by dragging her away to her old bedroom to rest and "reconsider her position."

Surrounded by the portraits and heirlooms of her broken family, Rulushi only reflects on her past as Numerikov blathers on about her "best interests"...but her spirit serves her well once again when she knocks him unconscious and flees from the castle into the surrounding forest.

Numerikov gives chase, finally catching her at gunpoint. Revealing that he was the one who killed her father, he moves to strangle her...but is stopped by the timely intervention of Mellorink!

"Thanks for what you said at my trial," Mello growls, "this dogtag is your ticket to hell!"

Numerikov only begs for his miserable life, insisting he was forced to prosecute Mello, but Boyle's chopper flies over at that moment and scatters them with gunfire.

"There's the soldier that survives on one percent," Boyle laughs.

Boyle and Numerikov return to the castle, and Boyle apologizes for underestimating Mello. Helmeshion insists that he stay to act as a personal bodyguard, so it falls to Numerikov to lead a hunting party of A.T.'s into the forest.

Mello's skill, coupled with Rulushi's knowledge of the terrain, soon gets them into the castle itself to face Helmeshion.

But also waiting there is Boyle, who covers the General's escape and prepares for a rematch with Mello. Left to fend for himself, Numerikov is no match for the Armored Hunter.

Watching the conflict from the forest is Kiek Karadyne.

"It's almost over," he muses, "I'll be waiting for you, Mellorink."

10. CASTLE

With the castle to themselves, Mello and Rulushi prepare for Boyle's inevitable return. Casting a final glance at her old life, Rulushi agrees to give her family's castle over to Mellorink to do with what he must.

Elsewhere, Boyle's last argument with Helmeshion sets up a fateful scenario.

"This time," the General bellows, "kill him for sure! He is very dangerous to General Battentain's Perfect Soldier Project...like a live bullet next to the heart!"

Boyle departs only out of duty to his military...not out of any desire to support the controversial business of his superiors.

At the castle, Mellorink rigs his booby traps and joins Rulushi at the window as Boyle appears in the sky outside. His last move is to remove her from the line of fire.

Moments later, Boyle touches down. Mello's last request is for Boyle to let Rulushi go free if he dies. The Major complies, giving Mello time to place her safely in his chopper.

"With only that anti-A.T. rifle against my A.T. you have a big disadvantage," Boyle comments.

"This whole place is my advantage."

Now facing off against a real soldier, Mello has his hands full. Boyle plunges through trap after trap, amazed at the resourcefulness of this one young soldier. As they climb, Mello blows Boyle's weapons off one by one, finally taking the fight to the roof as the castle burns beneath them.

Rulushi wakes up in the chopper and coaxes it off the ground to pick up Mello before the castle crumbles, and Mello levels his rifle at Boyle for the final time.

"And now for the revenge of Lt. Schwepps' platoon..."

"Shwepps," Boyle gasps, "then you want the real man behind it all...in Corza City!"

11. BASE

Mello, Rulushi, and the wounded Boyle now fly to the Corza military base by helicopter, but are intercepted by gunships who demand ID. Mello prepares to bluff it out, but Boyle grabs the transceiver and gives the proper codes. Having faced Mello in battle and found him more worthy of respect than the cowardly Helmeshion, Boyle is more than willing to help him reach his goal.

At the base, Helmeshion speaks with a visitor: Kiek Karadyne. Still investigating the *Planbandol* Scan-

dal, Kiek now confronts the top officer himself: the last remaining suspect for the theft of *jijirium*. Mellorink has eliminated the others. The General scoffs, insisting Kiek has no business in this affair, and Kiek shows him the investigation orders.

Helmeshion laughs at Kiek's apparent ignorance; the orders are signed by Helmeshion's own superior, General Battentain. A call comes in to inform Helmeshion of Boyle's return.

Outside, Mello and Rulushi land their chopper and commandeer a jeep to find their way into the base.

Satisfied that Kiek poses no threat, Helmeshion berates his approach to his mission. "The best way to resolve any scandal like this is simply to kill everyone involved. On that score, Arity Mellorink did very well. And now he is dead himself."

But at that moment, another call reports a disturbance on the landing field; a firefight is in progress. "We're not sure what happened," a guard stammers, "Major Boyle has been wounded!"

His confidence shaken, Helmeshion orders the preparation of A.T.'s. Kiek finally throws diplomacy aside and pulls a gun on the General.

"Please relay the following orders..."

Having entered the base, Mello and Rulushi run for an elevator but are quickly pinned down by guards. Abruptly, an unexplained order is relayed from the base's command center to pull back. Not pausing to question their luck, Mello and Rulushi duck into the elevator and approach Helmeshion's office...followed by the wounded Major Boyle.

Mello is justly surprised to find Kiek with Helmeshion, and when the room is secured, the time for truth finally comes.

Kiek Karadyne is an intelligence operative. The *Planbandol* Scandal was such a complex, multi-layered event that even Mello's trial didn't begin to resolve it. Therefore, Kiek was ordered to sift out the details and erase them from existence.

Mellorink confronts Helmeshion with the horror he faced so that the officers could steal the *jijirium*.

"I don't know anything about that," Helmeshion replies, "perhaps Boyle or Numerikov did it for their own profit."

"Is that SO, General?" Boyle lurches into the room and reveals the final connection: Helmeshion himself ordered the Jllirum stolen to contribute to the Perfect Soldier Project.

Resigned to the truth, Helmeshion laughingly agrees. "The PS Project is vital for our future. My orders came from General Battentain."

"I see," Klek responds, "It's not good to reveal such an important thing in a place like this."

"We only follow our orders here. It's unfortunate that too many people know about this," Helmeshion stands aside to reveal Mello-rink. "I guess you'll have to kill them."

"Very well," Kiek concludes, moving toward the boy--and putting a bullet into Helmeshion's forehead!

"You said the best solution was to kill everyone involved--you are no exception."

In the space of a heartbeat, Mello and Rulushi realize what must come next.

Kiek turns to the Armored Hunter. "My original plan was for you to kill him."

The two fly from the room, barely avoiding Kiek's fire. Boyle is not so lucky.

12 LAST STAGE

A command bellows throughout the base as Mello and Rulushi rush headlong from Kiek. General Helmeshion has been assassinated, and Arity Mellorink is to be shot on sight for the murder. As the A.T.'s mobilize, a call directly from General Battentain authorizes Kiek to take command of the base.

Commander GILMAN balks at the irregularity, but Kiek calmly assures him everything will be over with soon enough.

Elsewhere, Rulushi hotwires a truck and the two fugitives plunge into a running battle with Scope-dogs. At a crucial moment, an A.T. pilot catches Mello cold. For the first time, he freezes--never has he faced death this way, at the hands of an equal. Rulushi snaps him back, and they watch helplessly as the A.T. pilot tumbles to his death.

Mello stops the truck, overcome by the violence at last. Rulushi tries to comfort him, but is interrupted by a beeping radio: Kiek hails them and begins to twist the knife.

"Your revenge is complete. Congratulations. I wasn't quite expecting what Boyle did, but he was looking for easy solutions, just like you. What you call revenge doesn't mean much in the end. You should have died on the battlefield and taken your beliefs with you to heaven. It didn't all happen as simply as you thought when your Lieutenant Schwepps got the order to cover the officers' retreat. They offered him the silver star for all your lives."

Enraged, Mello smashes the radio, but slowly Schwepps' last words drift across his memory.

"Everyone...I'm sorry."

Horrified at the revelation that even his own comrade had betrayed him, Mello nevertheless presses on and the base command center is suddenly distracted by a more ominous threat--an incoming fleet of Balalant warships!

Stopping for a respite in the desert, Mello prepares to return and settle his score with Kiek despite Rulushi's insistence that he has only been manipulated and should simply leave it all behind.

"If he says everything I did was just self-satisfaction, that's fine," Mello growls. "And that's how I'll play it to the very end."

Sobbing, Rulushi slaps him and runs away, saying he is no better than the other soldiers.

In the base command center, Gilman notices Kiek has disappeared. "He just left to save himself, like all the officers do!"

Mellorink sneaks back onto the base just as missile chutes open and a salvo rockets spaceward. Kiek's voice echoes behind him.

"The battle has begun again. You're in over your head. You don't know what the military really is. We all just use each other!"

A running battle begins, the two trading shots as more missiles launch around them. Kiek evades Mello's shots and vice versa until Mello loads his last shell and hesitates.

"What is it--can't kill me now?"

Mello answers the taunt with a gunburst--finding he has been decoyed. Kiek finally puts a bullet in Mello's leg.

"Your luck runs out with your blood. You should have been cleverer."

"Not yet. I may be just a little man who flowed away from the army, but I still don't forgive you!"

"Just as you see, the battle began again. Some people are happy with that. It's what we are. You can't be one of us."

Klek levels his gun for the final shot--when the Balalant bombs strike full force! In a split second, victory reverses itself...and Mello deals the death blow.

"You had...better luck after all," Kiek gasps. "This is the end of my ambition. Go on. You may be able to live outside the flow of the war." Mello leaves and Kiek looks after him in final lament.

"All this to learn the lot of the little man. But it isn't the way for me."

The next morning, Arity Mellorink meets Flurel Helmeshion in the desert and leaves his past behind.

THE END

Writer: Kanda Takeyuki

Director: Ryosuke Takahashi

Chara design: Moriasu Taniguchi

Mechadesign: Kunio Okawara

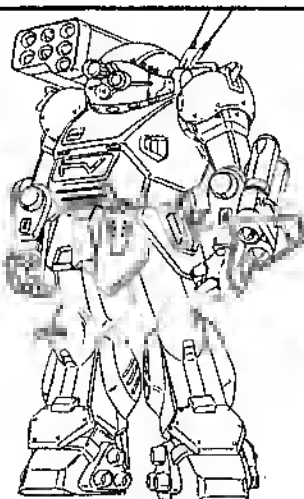
Music: Inui Hiroki

Story note: the name of Mellorink's old battalion, PLANBANDOL, carries a secondary meaning of special interest to continuity buffs. By breaking the word into three parts, we find 'Plan Ban Dol.' The term 'Ban Dol' can be transliterated as 'Bang Doll,' which is military slang for a female soldier. From simple extrapolation then, we can assume the 'Bang Doll' in question was none other than Proto-1 and that the 'Plan' was to funnel stolen jirium into the Perfect Soldier Project.

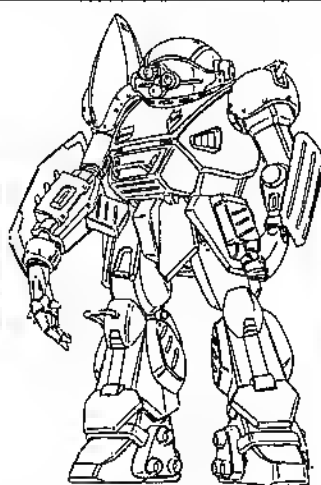
Misc. Data: Whereas Chirico's Red Shoulder Battalion was officially the 24th Detachment of Merukian Special Forces, Mellorink's Planbandol Battalion was the Merukian Army's 18th detachment, assigned to duty on the planet Mioite (Prou. Me-oy-tay.) At 17 years old, Mello was a sergeant secondary to Starcos under Lt. Schwepps.

Special note: sharp-eyed viewers will notice a familiar face on the prison plane in episode 6. Make of this what you will.

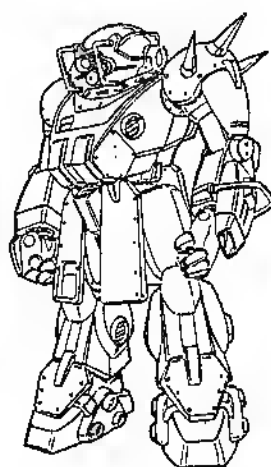
A.T. VARIATION IN MELLORINK



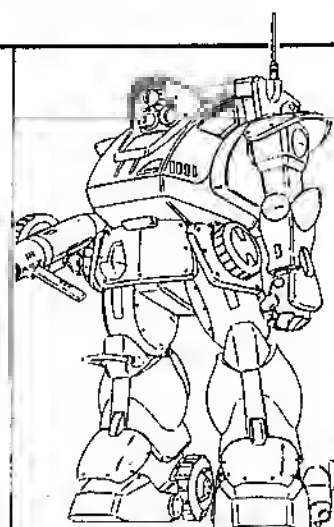
ATM-09-STC
Scopedog Custom
(Ep. 1/Docman)



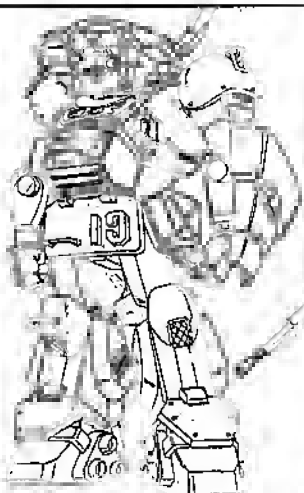
ATM-09-BTC
Battle Ring Custom
(Ep. 2/Galvin Fox)



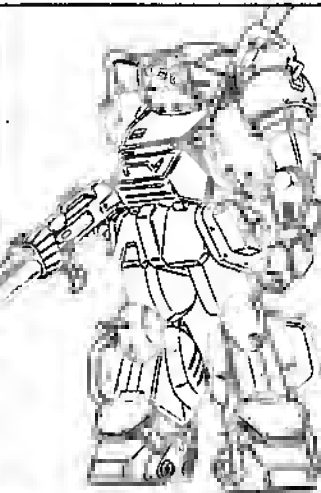
ATM-09-BTC
Battle Ring Custom
(Ep. 2/Miscellaneous)



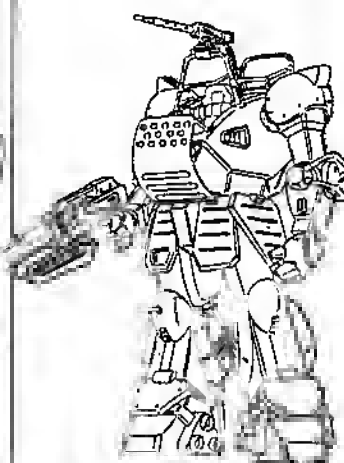
ATH-14-STC
Tortoise w/Gliding Wheel
(Ep. 3/Stavros)



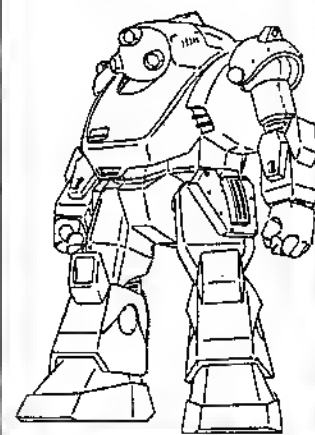
ATM-09-STR
Scopedog/Riot Gear
(Ep. 6/Prison unit)



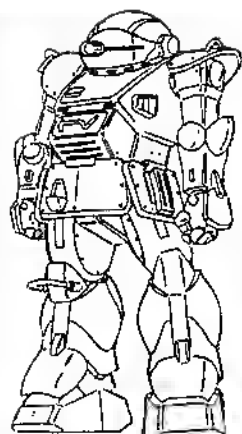
ATM-09-STC
Scopedog Custom
(Ep. 7/Gannard)



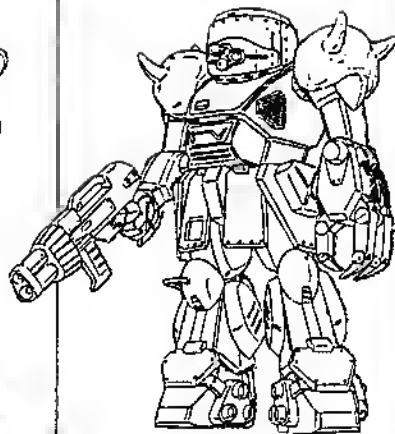
ATM-09-STC
"Gabriole Dog"
(Ep. 7/Bandit custom)



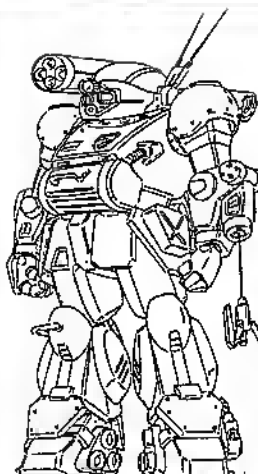
ATH-06-STC
"Dumping Beetle"
(Ep. 7/Bandit custom)



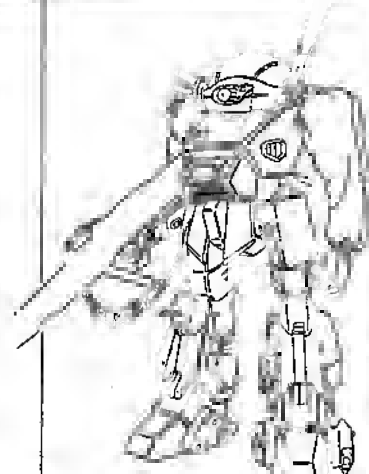
ATM-09-STC
"Goldenhalf Special"
(Ep. 7/Bandit custom)



ATM-09-STC
"Cossack Dog"
(Ep. 7/Bandit custom)



ATM-09-STC
"Bounty Dog"
(Ep. 8/Boyle)



ATM-09-STC
Light Scopedog
(Ep. 9/Numerikov)

SERIES TIMELINE

For Those keeping track, here are a few prominent dates in the VOTOMS continuity dated by Astragius Galaxy year and month.

- 7113 100 Year War Begins
- 7183 Perfect Soldier Project Begun
- 7188 Artificial Muscle Cylinder developed for robotic trooper
- 7193 First Mechanical Trooper (M.T.) developed and implemented
- 7195 First Armored Trooper (A.T.) developed and implemented
- 7196/7 Chirico Cuvie Born
- 7198 Planet Merukia joins Gilgamesh
- 7210 Red Shoulder Battalion formed
- 7212/10 Chirico Joins Red Shoulders
- 7213/2 Third invasion of Sunsa by Gilgamesh Army and Red Shoulder
- 7213/3 Armistice Signed
- 7213/7 Chirico Transferred; Operation RID
- 7213/9 War officially over, armies deregulated and reduced to primary units
- 7214/3 Death of Yoran Peruzen
- 7215 Destruction of Quent, new war begins

GILGAMETH ALPHABET AND NUMERICAL SYSTEM

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W	X	Y	Z
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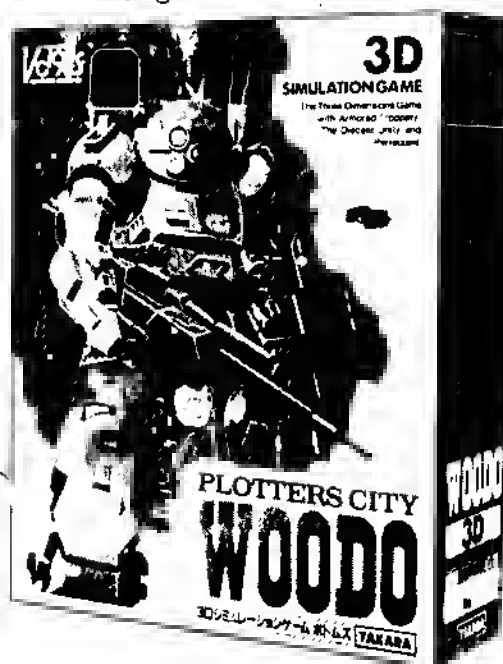
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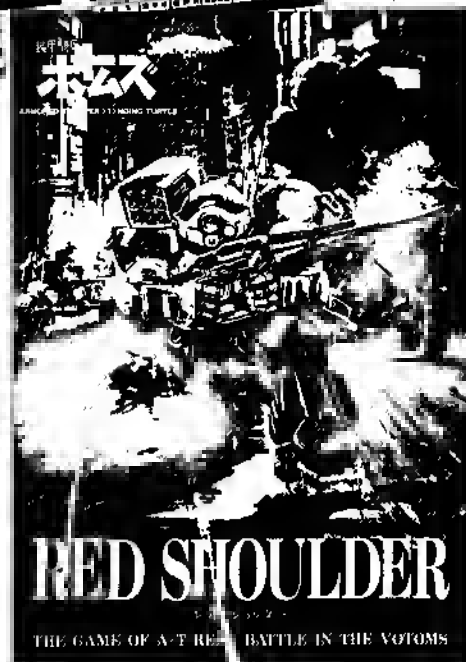


WARGAMES

TAKARA CORP.

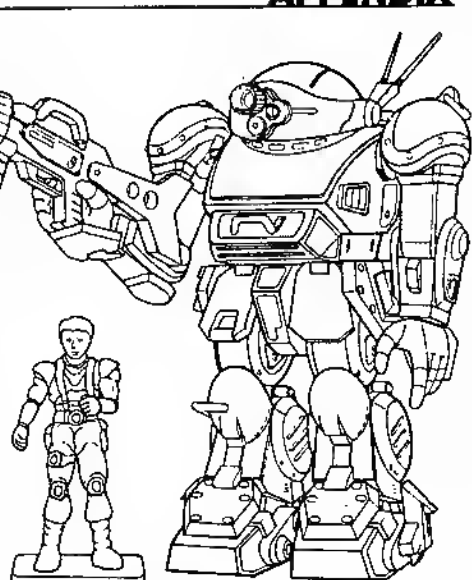
Not dissimilar to many American wargames, these sets include metal pieces, area maps, and stat lists in much the same configuration. The difference, of course, is the premise, which is A.T. combat.

Three VOTOMS games have so far been published: UODO (with Battle Ring), KUMMEN (Jungle war), and RED SHOULDER (basic real battle).



MODEL KIT LINES

As the primary sponsor of the animated series, TAKARA Corporation was quick to introduce plastic models and toys of the Armored Troopers in various scales. By 1983 standards, these kits were excellent in detail and poseability. They were joined by a line of smaller kits manufactured by UNION in 1984 and 1985. But because the following years saw both an increase in VOTOMS' popularity and a significant jump in modelling technology, limited edition "Garage Kits" began to appear in substantial numbers. Being produced by smaller companies with smaller budgets, these kits are made of resin or soft vinyl instead of mass-market styrene plastic. Although this makes them considerably more difficult to build, an experienced modeller can achieve much finer results. By 1990, Garage Kits had far outdistanced the original Takara kits in form and accuracy, but the continuous re-issuing of the older models still attests to their popularity among the modelling community. Below is a list of kits that have been produced since 1983. PLAMO indicates a plastic, mass-market edition. RGK indicates a Resin Garage Kit. VGK indicates a vinyl Garage Kit. "Y" denotes the yen price of the kit.



TAKARA 1/35 scale (Plamo)

1. ST 8ACCHUS (600Y)
2. SCOPEDOG (600Y)
3. BRUTISHDOG (600Y)
4. ST TORTOISE (600Y)
5. MARSHYDOG (800Y)
6. BERSERGA (800Y)
7. SNAPPING TURTLE (600Y)
8. DIVING BEETLE (800Y)
9. ST TURTLE (800Y)
10. STRIKEDOG (800Y)
11. RED SHOULDER CUSTOM (700Y)
12. SCOPEDOG/RD. MOVER (700Y)

TAKARA 1/48 scale (plamo)

1. SCOPEDOG
2. MARSHYDOG

TAKARA 1/24 scale (plamo)

1. SCOPEDOG (1300Y)
2. BRUTISHDOG (1200Y)
3. SCOPEDOG w/access. (1400Y)
4. MARSHYDOG (1200Y)
5. SNAPPING TURTLE (1200Y)
6. ST TURTLE (1200Y)

TAKARA 1/60 scale (toy)

Die Cast Metal A.T. line

1. SCOPEDOG
2. BRUTISHDOG
3. ST TORTOISE
4. MARSHYDOG
5. SNAPPING TURTLE
6. DIVING BEETLE
7. BERSERGA

TAKARA 1/35 scale (toy)

"Joint Model"

1. SCOPEDOG w/Red Shoulder Custom parts (2300Y)
2. SNAPPING TURTLE w/Space Assault parts

TAKARA 1/24 scale (toy)

"Dual Model"

1. SCOPEDOG (3500Y)
2. BRUTISHDOG (3500Y)
3. RED SHOULDER CUSTOM (4500Y)

UNION 1/60 scale (plamo)

300Y each

1. SCOPEDOG w/Rd. Mover
2. RED SHOULDER CUSTOM
3. MARSHYDOG
4. SNAPPING TURTLE
5. STRIKEDOG
6. ST TORTOISE Mk. II/SA
7. BRUTISHDOG
8. BERSERGA DT
9. HANDWEAPONS
10. SCOPEDOG w/chute sack
11. RABIDLYDOG
12. FATTY
13. ZWERG
14. TURBO CUSTOM

LARK (RGK)

1. 1/35 FATTY (4300Y)
2. 1/35 ZWERG (3500Y)
3. 1/35 RABIDLYDOG (conversion parts for Takara's 1/35 Strikedog: 2500Y)
4. 1/35 BERSERGA DT (conversion parts for Takara's 1/35 Berserga: 3200Y)
5. 1/24 TURBO CUSTOM (conversion parts for Takara's 1/24 Scopedog: 4900Y)
6. 1/24 BLOODSUCKER (7800Y)

WAVE (RGK)

1. 1/35 SCOPEDOG/Full Action
2. 1/35 RABIDLYDOG (7800Y)
3. 1/35 ZWERG
4. 1/35 ECRUBIS (7500Y)

WAVE continued

5. 1/24 TURBO CUSTOM (5800Y)
6. 1/35 FATTY (6900Y)
7. 1/35 BLOODSUCKER (8200Y)
8. 1/35 TURBO CUSTOM (conversion parts for Takara's 1/35 Scopedog: 5400Y)
9. 1/35 BLUE KNIGHT BERSERGA (5800Y)
10. 1/35 FUNNY DEVIL (5000Y)
11. 1/35 ZERBERUS (7500Y)
12. 1/35 TESTA ROSSA (1200Y)
13. 1/1 ARMORED MAGNUM (45000Y)

MAX FACTORY (VGK)

1/24 DIVING BEETLE

L. MAX (Lark in combination with Max Factory; VGK)

1. 1/24 BERSERGA BTS II
2. 1/24 SHADOW FLARE (6800Y)
3. 1/24 ZERBERUS
4. 1/24 TESTA ROSSA

KAIYODO (RGK)

1/35 TURBO CUSTOM

G-PORT 1/48 scale 9RGK

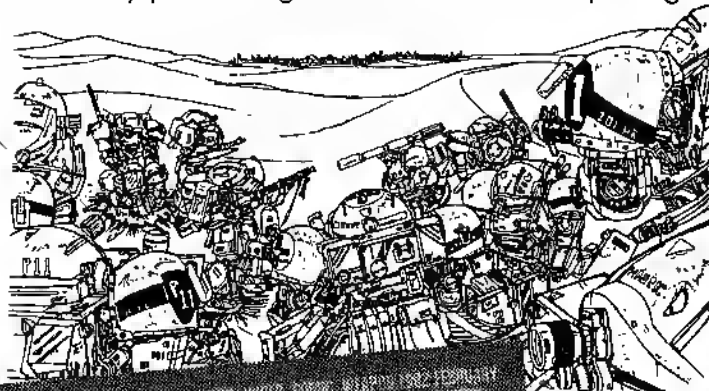
1. SCOPEDOG/Rd. Mover (4000Y)
2. STRIKEDOG (4200Y)
3. FATTY (4200Y)
4. TURBO CUSTOM (4500Y)
5. BLOODSUCKER (4200Y)
6. MARSHYDOG (4000Y)
7. SNAPPING TURTLE (4200Y)
8. DIVING BEETLE (4300Y)
9. BERSERGA (4300Y)
10. RABIDLYDOG (4500Y)
11. BERSERGA DT (4500Y)
12. ZWERG (4500Y)

NOTES: the term PLAMO, while indicating a Plastic Model, also is a term for 'Play Model.' This phrase was coined when polycap and joint technology began to allow for fully-posable kits you could actually play with. WAVE's 1/24 Turbo Custom (5800Y) is technically a Plamo, given that it is one of the first fully posable Garage Kits ever produced and is, in fact, formed of injection molded plastic with polycap joints.



CYBER COMICS

Produced by BANDAI, debuted in 1988. Although most of the stories featured in this monthly anthology manga are spinoffs of GUNDAM, two VOTOMS strips have appeared in its pages. "EXCELLENT A.T." and "BLUE SONGS" formed a two-part story in issues 2 and 3 concerning field experiments with advanced Armored Troopers. Issues of CYBER COMICS published in 1992 contained a serialized adventure involving Kiek Karadyne from ARMORED HUNTER MELLORINK facing down a dissident of the Gilgamesh Army performing terrorist acts in a Scopedog.



COMPUTER GAMES

Released by Family Soft in 1989 and 1991 respectively, these two games are compatible with IBM PC's. In the tactical battlefield simulator game BLACK UNICORN, you are A.T. Pilot Macolin Onuhaishis of the Merukian Special Forces battling Balalant A.T.'s on the planet Parumis. In the arcade-style game DEAD ASH, you are A.T. pilot Arthur Laiton (ring name 'Ash'), squaring off against other A.T.'s in the Battle ring.



DEAD ASH



ENTERTAINMENT BIBLE No. 5

Also published by BANDAI, the E.B. series covers different anime programs in concise detail. This particular volume was published in 1989 and was the first book to feature printed material on the ROOTS OF TREACHERY video, including character art and Turbo Custom variations for the Scopedogs of Red Shoulder Battalion.

The book also collects previously published mecha, character, and set designs, and features additional articles on A.T. technology and development. Of special interest is a complete chart of stats for the entire A.T. lineup and handweapons.

